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THE
STRIPLING PREACHER,
OR A SKETCH OF THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER,
WITH THE
THEOLOGICAL REMAINS
OF THE
REV. ALEXANDER S. BYRNE,
BY
REV. JOHN CARROLL.

WRITTEN AND COMPILED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CONFERENCE.

“While he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father.” 2 CHRON. XXIV. 3.

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INTRODUCTION.

HISTORY in general, but especially personal history, or biography when written with propriety, abounding so much in incident, and furnishing so much variety to the mind, is an interesting sort of writing to most readers. And it must be as instructive as it is interesting. "History," it has been said, "is philosophy teaching by examples." Yet what are the "examples" in general history so instructive, but instances of individual biography with which it is interspersed, or, we might even say, of which it is composed?

If, therefore, the instances of personal history, incidentally brought out, in works of a general character are so pleasing and profitable, may it not be reasonably inferred, that works written expressly to illustrate the principles and actions of individual men must be pre-eminently so? The experience and testimony of all confirm this. It is freely granted, that many productions of this kind, through defects in the subjects of which they treat, or in the execution of the works themselves, even where the intention is manifestly good, are futile,

and some are positively injurious. We also concede, that it would be impracticable and useless to publish the life of every good man, or even *minister*, who may have faithfully “served his generation by the will of God.” There is such an undeniable sameness in the general features of the history and character of most pious persons, that to read the life of one would be to read the lives of many. A few histories of such ordinary-good people, perhaps, is enough.

While, however, this is admitted, it must be maintained, there are others whose mental constitution and talents—whose religious character and usefulness—or the circumstances of whose history, are altogether so remarkable as to constitute an exception. Such an exception, if his piety and endowments are considered, we humbly conceive, was the youthful subject of this biographical sketch.

These considerations, joined to the request of his brethren, have influenced the Editor of these papers to undertake his present task. A work on which he enters with the sincerest diffidence; not only from its being to him an untried department, but from the fact, that the most important of all materials for such a production, namely, a *private diary* or *journal*, is wanting. The only personal record left by the deceased was the dates of a few important events connected with his natural and religious life, on a detached piece of paper not four inches square. As a substitute for this, however, it is but just to say,

that his biographer has been furnished with a short connected history from his bereaved father; and also a written communication from each of the other two superintendents with whom he laboured during the short but brilliant and useful period of his itinerancy, expressive of their views of his character and of his labours while associated with them in the work of the ministry. Of the sentiments, and sometimes words, of these valuable productions, he has availed himself as occasion required. After all, it is with extreme distrust, that he submits his lucubrations to the public. Still, humbly confident of the purity of his motives, and the goodness of his subject, he is not without hope, that, in answer to earnest and oft-repeated prayer, the Divine Being will make it a blessing, in prompting some at least to imitate the virtues of this youthful saint. This object gained, the author will rest satisfied and thankful.

The plan of the work adopted by the writer has been, to consider, his *early history*; his *conversion*, and *incipient efforts to be useful*; his *itinerant life and labours*; and his *sickness and death*—with a *review of his mental and moral character*.

THE STRIPLING PREACHER, &c.

EARLY HISTORY.

ALEXANDER STURGEON BYRNE, the subject of this memoir, was the son of the Rev. CLAUDIUS BYRNE, who was for about twenty-four years a laborious and useful minister of Christ, in connexion with the Irish Wesleyan Conference, and who at the present time is exercising his ministry in Canada in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The younger Byrne was also born in Ireland, in the town of Dungannon, County Tyrone, which event transpired, June 20th, A. D. 1832. He was called at his baptism, after the Rev. Alexander Sturgeon, his maternal grandfather, who was for many years a highly esteemed and useful Wesleyan Minister in Ireland. As he was descended from a pious stock, and the immediate son of exemplary, pious parents, so also there was something remarkable in his history and character from his birth. His very introduction into the world was attended by circumstances corresponding with his after-holy life, and which go to show, that the blessing of Jehovah is bestowed upon those that acknowledge him. What we refer to shall be stated in the words of his father.—“A

few hours after his birth, the late venerable Gideon Ousley, who happened to be passing through the town, called to see the family; and was introduced into the apartment where the mother and babe were lying. After making remarks which had reference to the goodness of God in mercifully preserving life in the hour of nature's sorrow, and the 'joy' permitted mothers 'when a man-child is born into the world,' he kneeled down, and devoutly returned thanks to the Father of Mercies for her safe delivery; at the same time, participating in our feelings as parents, he dedicated our darling one to Him 'in whom we live and move, and have our being.' "

From so auspicious a birth-day scene, we are not surprised to learn, from the same source, that "even in helpless infancy, he was remarkable for the placidity of his disposition, and long before he could articulate, his manner of taking notice of objects around was indicative of a mind of more than ordinary promise." Nor does it appear that these early buddings of intellect were left by his truly assiduous parents to unfold themselves in an unpropitious moral atmosphere; but on the contrary, every effort was made to direct his precociously active and inquiring mind to things sacred and divine. And if a similar course were pursued by parents in general, similar results, so far as piety is concerned, would be usually witnessed.

His parents, with a right appreciation of their obligations to their covenant God, to whom they had dedicated their child in baptism, introduced him, from the time he was able to profit by them in the smallest degree, to all the services of the Christian church, and to those social means also which are peculiar to the denom-

ination to which they belonged. It is even said, that a pious nurse, who was a faithful domestic in the family for many years, and to whom no doubt this child owed much, took him in her arms to class-meeting from the time he was capable of being taken out at all, as well as to all the other means of grace. And the only instance of his ever being known to disturb the exercises at all was once after he was able to talk, when observing his nurse to weep passionately in class-meeting, he judged it the result of something severe the leader had spoken to her, his childish indignation was aroused, and he expressed his sympathy for his beloved nurse by begging "Jenny" not to "cry for him." Such a mistake, the result of his inexperience, and displaying so much nobility of heart, was easily forgiven by the leader; and was made the occasion by his ever watchful parents of "instructing him in the way of the Lord more perfectly," by telling him the cause of Jenny's tears. His father remarks, "We do not recollect that he was ever absent from class-meeting from this period, except when some of the complaints incidental to children (which was seldom indeed) rendered it necessary to detain him at home." Nor did his religious tendencies and dispositions appear from his punctual attendance on the means of grace alone. He was scrupulously exact in the observance of the christian Sabbath. His parents do not remember of a single instance in which they had to chide him for a word or action incompatible with its sanctity. He was also religiously observant of the quarterly fasts of the church, which he heard announced from the pulpit. On these occasions it is said his parents found it difficult to induce him to take a sufficiency of nourishment to prevent illness.

He was taught from infancy to entertain the greatest respect for all office-bearers in the church of Christ, especially for the ministers of the gospel. And in this particular his profiting appeared unto all that knew him. He would never allow any minister to be spoken of depreciatingly in his presence, without defending the absent person, and perhaps reproving his censurer. Nor did he "let any man despise himself," young though he was, after he had entered on the sacred ministry himself.

His facilities for intellectual improvement were not less than were those for his religious ; nor was his improvement less. On this subject we will listen to the statement of the elder Mr. BYRNE. "When the time came for making the first efforts in his mental training, no child could have afforded a mother more gratification than he, by his close attention to his lessons, and the readiness with which he comprehended every idea presented to his mind. When he had got sufficiently advanced in English, she introduced him to the French grammar. And my astonishment was greatly excited, one evening, but a short time after he had begun to apply himself to this study, to hear him read in that language, and translate into English, a whole psalm, with a facility that appeared truly wonderful."

"When he was eleven or twelve years of age, I was appointed to the town of Enniskillen, where there was a good classical school, which he attended. Here he made considerable proficiency in the rudiments of the Latin and Greek languages. It is surprising with what rapidity he went through the elementary studies in these departments of literature. At my next station, I was specially favoured by being introduced to a venerable gentleman, who was

a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin. This affectionate person took a peculiar interest in the welfare of our dear boy; and frequently did he say to me, that he never had a pupil who afforded him higher satisfaction." Mr. BYRNE'S, jealous watchfulness over the religious principles of his son, prevented him from availing himself of still higher literary advantages in that son's behalf; presented by an introductory letter from the benevolent gentleman last referred to, to a certain learned Doctor at the head of a college situated in the town that constituted his last Circuit in Ireland, as Mr. B. had reason to fear, that that eminent and amiable individual was tinctured with some of those doctrinal errors which have of late years proved so baneful to the Protestantism of what are called the churches of England and Ireland; judging rightly, that literary improvement bears no comparison in importance to "soundness of faith," and the salvation of the immortal soul. This was a noble-minded preference of spiritual to temporal interests, and a commendable instance of caution, which, had it been always imitated on the part of Methodists, aye, and of Methodist ministers also, there would not have been so many painful instances of children forsaking the truth in which they were early instructed, and the church of their fathers, to become the adherents and advocates of a powerless and soul-deluding ceremonialism.

CONVERSION AND INCIPIENT EFFORTS TO
BE USEFUL.

Having looked into his boyish history and employments, which have always an important relation to a person's after-life and character, we come to contemplate the unfolding of that spiritual life, that constitutes the more interesting subject of inquiry. Man by nature is possessed of two kinds of life—physical and mental—which commence unfolding as soon as he is born: the renewed man is distinguished by another—spiritual life,—which originates in conversion, and which, thenceforward, is susceptible of progress till it receives its full development. Conversion, therefore, is an event most important in its character and engaging in its contemplation. To the consideration of this event, as it occurs in the history of this pious youth, we now come.

Its date and place of occurrence are thus laconically set down by the subject of our narrative in the brief autographic memorandum referred to in our introduction:—"Justified in Dundalk, County Louth, Ireland, on 15th Feb, 1846." Although he had been the subject of a gracious influence, and more or less of the fear of God from infancy, and sometimes of deep religious emotions—particularly once when about five years old, after hearing the venerable Matthew Tobias relate in a revival-meeting the touching circumstances connected with the conversion of a little boy, he "thought," as he expressed himself to his little sister, two years older than himself, the next morning; he would have "got his new heart at the meeting" the night before—yet he was never before,

up to this period, able to rejoice in God as his reconciled Father.

The exercises through which he passed immediately previous to this interesting change, and the change itself, are thus described by his affectionate father:—"About Christmas season, 1845, he became very anxious respecting his spiritual state; and although we knew it not at the time, for nearly a week immediately preceding his being blessed with pardoning mercy, he was up to a late hour each night wrestling with God in prayer for a revelation of peace to his soul. One Sabbath evening, I preached from Rom. viii. 1.; under which sermon he was much impressed. After service, he retired to his chamber, and resumed his agonizing exercises, and continued them the greater part of the night, and before break-of-day he was permitted to feel, that to them that believe, 'Jesus is precious.' Next morning, his countenance glowed with what was expressive of great mental enjoyment; but his natural reservedness and modesty caused him to conceal from his mother and me what had transpired. But at the next Sabbath class-meeting the whole was fully developed, when, to the astonishment of all who were present, it was evident that out of his youthful mouth 'the Lord had ordained praise.' He then spoke (for the first time in this social means of grace) in a strain of sublimity, and with a scriptural propriety that would almost have made it appear that he had been caught up to the third heaven. The day preceding the Sabbath on which he had thus spoken, he wrote and posted (for the first time that we knew) a letter to his sister, who at the time was residing at the house of her paternal uncle, through whose kindness she was attending a musical academy, giving an account of

the happy change that had taken place with him." I here subjoin a copy, as an exhibition of the love and zeal which always attend the introduction of a believer into the favour of God:—

‘MY DEAR MARY,—

‘As it is now a long time since I had the pleasure of addressing you, and this being Saturday, I embrace the opportunity of writing you. I hope that Uncle, Aunt, and Cousin are all well. Thank God, Papa, Mamma, and all at home are well! I suppose by this time you have made great proficiency in music; but, my dear Mary, what signifies the proficiency we make in any department of science, or an accomplishment however useful or adequate to the furtherance of our interests in this life, if we remain strangers to the power of religion in the soul, in a state of rebellion against God, and without a sense of his pardoning love? And, again, of what great advantage, either in this world, or that which is to come, would our education be to us, if not combined with that religion which alone can make us really happy? It is this alone that is adequate to support us under every trial and temptation through which we have to pass. You may wonder why in this letter I address you on a subject and in a strain which I never before adopted. My dear Mary, it is with feelings of holy joy I inform you, that on last Sunday night, while engaged in prayer, and burdened with a deep sense of guilt, sin, misery, and a need of redemption through a Saviour’s blood, I found joy and peace through believing. And, thank God! although nearly a week has elapsed since that event, and I have had many temptations to unbelief, yet I feel, that in that

short period I have been growing in grace and in the future knowledge of my Lord and Saviour in all things ; and I enjoy more peace of mind and am even happier than when I first believed. It occurred to my mind, that I ought to write to you, in order that you might be a partaker of like precious faith. For, believe me, Mary, you lie very near my heart—you who have been the subject of so many prayers and so much parental anxiety. I beseech you by all the prayers that have been offered up by me and others, who are concerned for your welfare, that you remain no longer a stranger to true happiness!—but when you read this letter, go to your closet, and there pray to God, if you have not yet got a clear view of yourself as a lost sinner, that he would show you your real state; and that your sins might be all forgiven you, and that you might find peace with God. Be assured,

“ ‘ All the fitness he requires,
Is to feel your need of him,’ ”

Then you will be happy, and know by heart-felt experience, that ‘ Godliness has the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.’ And now, I pray God, that this letter may accomplish the purpose whereunto it is sent! Remember me to Uncle, and Aunt, and Cousin.

“ I remain your affectionate Brother,

“ ALEXANDER BYRNE.

“ P. S.—Read your Bible daily.’ ”

The reader having accompanied us from the birth of the subject of our contemplation, up to the period of his saving conversion, and thus traced the operation of those

principles of divine truth that were early implanted in his infant mind, by parental care, and which were assiduously cherished by the various agencies of the church, producing first that "fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom," till they ripened into the full enjoyment of "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him," we proceed now to contemplate those first efforts to be useful to which this glorious change gave rise. The language which the soul under the impulses of its first love feels to utter, is—

"Oh, that the world might taste and see,
The riches of his grace!
The arms of love that compass me,
Would all mankind embrace."

This it seems was the feeling that possessed the soul of BVRNE at this interesting period.

The manner in which he was first led to address others by way of exhortation or preaching, and the manner in which his talents were brought into exercise and his powers of thought and delivery were developed, are thus related, substantially, by his then deeply interested father :—"A few weeks after his conversion, then entering on his fifteenth year, he was urged to address the teachers of the Sabbath School, which he did in a strain of simple eloquence that greatly surprised his hearers; they almost felt as if an angel had appeared among them. At this period my own mind became peculiarly impressed respecting him, and I resolved as soon as possible to avail myself of an opportunity of hearing him. The first time I accomplished my purpose, it was by getting into the congregation in a concealed manner. He preached from Prov. xiv. 14.; 'The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways.'

I cannot now describe what my feelings were then. While this mere stripling was developing the solemn truths which the text embodied, a deep impression pervaded my mind and many others that night, that in him was the 'nucleus of 'a workman that needed not to be ashamed.' At this period of his procedure, knowing his reservedness towards me and others of mature years, I proposed a plan for drawing out fully his theological views. It was this, that we should commence a series of letters upon the great leading doctrines of Christianity, and especially those of them to which the Wesleyan Church gives prominence. My own epistles were generally of an interrogatory character; and he had ten or twelve days to prepare his reply to each communication. During these pleasing and profitable exercises, I can truly say, I passed some of the happiest hours of my life; especially when perusing the effusions of a mind scarcely passed infantile years, manifesting a maturity of thought, an accuracy of expression, with a chasteness of style, that, both I and other ministers of special acquaintance, could not but regard, as the brilliancies of a diamond of the first water. From this time forward, generally on Sabbath, (for his time during the week days was occupied with his books) he preached once a day with increasing acceptance. And it was to us cause of unfeigned gratitude to God, that, while large congregations pressed upon him, we could not perceive in any instance a disposition to self-importance, or a forgetfulness, that the foot of the Cross was the true position of safety."

The Wesleyan Church, constructed on the model of the primitive one, feels that she needs the exercise of every particle of available talent in her members, in

carrying out her plans of aggression on the kingdom of darkness; while she furnishes an appropriate sphere for its operation. In her lay agencies of prayer and class-leader, of exhorter and local preacher, to say nothing of the Sunday-school teacher, tract-distributor, &c., &c., common to nearly all sections of the evangelical church, she furnishes a gradation of offices and employments by which approved persons ascend to her ministry. Thus it is, that by the time they have obtained the office of "elders," they have not only "purchased to themselves a good degree," but also "great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus." The church was not long in discovering that the youthful BYRNE had capabilities that might be made available to her edification, and that she had a post of usefulness to give him. That post was the important office of class-leader—an office the nature of which is too well known, and the necessity of which must be too deeply felt by those for whom this book is intended, to require description or defence from us. All the biographer knows of the history of this appointment is from the brief chronicle referred to in the early part of this work; in which he says, in its usual elliptical style, "Appointed Leader, by Dungannon Quarterly Meeting, Monday, 21st Sept., 1846." This was about seven months after his conversion. Surely his profiting and progress must have been great, to lead thus early to such an appointment.

Subsequently to this, as the entry is made after, although the precise date is not given, he who had been by toleration, practically a local preacher for several months, was formally accredited after a trial sermon, which, he says, was "preached before the Rev. J. C. Bass, at Mr. J. Thompson's, Mully-Crannon, Dungannon Circuit, from Eph. v. 14."

The office of a local preacher he continued to exercise with increasing fidelity and ability till "Monday, 20th March, 1848," a year and a half after his being approved, when, as we learn from the above source of information, he was "recommended to the District Meeting," as a probationer for the regular ministry. Whether he, who had thus obtained the suffrages of the lay offices of the church, in favour of his entrance on the itinerant work, ever went before the court referred to, intermediate to the conference, in his own country, does not appear. It is likely he did not, for the next entry in his memoranda relates to his sailing for America—the intention to do which, on the part of his father, was probably the reason for not taking any more steps towards an entrance on the ministry in Ireland.

His honoured parent had, after prayerfully revolving the subject some time in his mind, resolved, for reasons that appeared sufficient to himself, on quitting his native shores for America; and the son, though flattering prospects presented themselves in Europe, with true filial affection, never hesitated a moment about accompanying the family to this country. The date of this event is thus laconically set down by Alexander:—"Left Ireland, on Thursday, 13th of July, 1848." "Embarked for America"—perhaps from some port in England(?)—"On Friday, 21st July, 1848." As an exemplification of the esteem in which the subject of this sketch and his friends were held, and the peculiar emotions with which their removal was regarded, two facts may be referred to. The first was this:—"On Monday evening, the 12th of June, an interesting Tea-Meeting was held in the Wesleyan Chapel, Perry Street, Dungannon," the head of Mr. BYRNE'S last Irish Circuit,

to which he had been appointed three several times, “the object of which was to present a beautifully bound quarto edition of Bagster’s Bible to the Rev. CLAUDIUS BYRNE, as a token of the high esteem in which he and his family were held, by the members and friends of Methodism on the circuit.” On that occasion, an “Address” was presented Mr. BYRNE by “the Stewards, Leaders and Members of the Wesleyan Church, on the Dungannon Circuit,” in which his labours and the estimation in which his character was held were spoken of in the most flattering terms. The subject of this memoir is referred to in that address in the following words:—“We cannot conclude this address without affectionately alluding to your son, who, at an age little beyond childhood, has occasionally occupied our pulpits, and met the entire approbation of the most experienced christian brethren. We believe that he has ministerial talents of high promise, which, by cultivation and the grace of God, shall obtain for him an exalted standing among the labourers in Christ’s vineyard, wherever his lot may be cast; but especially in a land possessing so many advantages and facilities for extensive usefulness as America naturally does.” The Address concludes with a wish, expressed in the following words:—“We now sincerely hope and pray, that the Great Head of the Church, will, in a distant land, cheer and comfort you and your family, as He has, in innumerable instances, made you the means of comforting and cheering others, and crown your future labours with abundant success.” The sincerity of this solicitude, and the esteem in which the subjects of it were held, was evinced by the pious friends of the family holding a prayer-meeting in their behalf, for five successive Tuesdays after they left the old country, in

Dungannon, the place in which Mr. BYRNE, jun'r, had received his natural birth, which meeting was conducted by a Mr. R. McGuffin, a devoted servant of God. This is the second "fact" to which we intended to refer.

Their prayer was evidently heard, for the BYRNES, had a safe and comfortable, though not speedy, passage across the Atlantic. And it is worthy of remark, that they were just *five weeks* in accomplishing this voyage, corresponding exactly to the number of weeks during which the prayer-meetings were kept up on their behalf. It was improved by ALEXANDER in study and usefulness; and closed with an event which at once exemplifies the efficiency of prayer, the providence of God, and the fortitude and faith of this youth. The circumstance is thus related by the elder Mr. BYRNE:—"At 'Sandy-Hook,' when nearing New York, the ship (the *Ivanhoe* of New York, with 1200. tons of cargo and 500. passengers) about twelve o'clock, midnight, got aground. The swelling of the sea occasionally lifted the vessel, so that her keel would strike the sand, with such force, as to produce a vibration, that greatly terrified a large proportion of the passengers, who arose from their births with considerable confusion, and rushed to the decks. While I and a brother minister were among the confused mass, making an effort to tranquillize their feelings, our dear boy, like a christian philosopher, called into our cabin as many as could command themselves; and kneeled with them, to implore the God of the seas and of the dry land, to interpose graciously in their behalf. At this time the captain and pilot were, with vociferation, requiring the boats to be launched, that the sailors might, at some distance from our position, try for soundings. Scarcely had the boats reached the

water, when a sudden breeze sprung up—the pilot ordered the shifting of the main sail—and in a moment, we were afloat in deep water. It was remarkable, that this desirable circumstance transpired, while my son, in prayer, partly quoted the words of Paul, saying, ‘We shall be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among us.’ The people who were on deck at this moment gave an exulting shout; while those who were engaged in prayer, arose from their knees and sung,—

‘Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.’ ”

According to ALEXANDER’S memorandum, they “landed in New York, Friday, the 25th of August, 1848.”

In this city the family was treated with the hospitality and kindness which distinguish its Methodist citizens; and the youthful subject of this history preached several times in some of the most prominent pulpits connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, with great approval, to immensely large congregations. As the uncle of Mr. A. BYRNE, an able minister, late of the Irish Conference, took up his abode in the United States, so he and his family were requested to remain in that Republic. Especially the younger Mr. BYRNE, received the offer of a University education, free of all expense to him or his friends, if he would only stay and prosecute his ministry there. But their purpose was to serve the interests of the Wesleyan Church in Canada; and for Canada they left in a few days, and, (we quote from Mr. A. B.’s memoranda) “Arrived in Toronto, Thursday, 15th of September, 1848.”

In this city and neighbourhood, Mr. A. BYRNE preached several times, much to the satisfaction and profit of those that heard him—making one excursion, to attend a chapel anniversary, in company with the Rev. Dr. RICHEY, as far west as London. In the last mentioned town his services were lauded in the highest terms; and he returned to Toronto, followed by the good wishes of its inhabitants, and hearing still more substantial evidences of their favour.

It was on the occasion of this visit, that the compiler of this little work, then stationed in London, formed his first acquaintance with him. I was out, attending to some pastoral duty, when he and the distinguished minister whom he had accompanied, arrived at my house. On returning, I had the pleasure of welcoming the Doctor and his youthful companion. I was struck with the extremely juvenile appearance of the latter. “Juvenile,” not in comparison with his *age* (for he was not yet seventeen years, by some months); but juvenile, compared with the solemn character of the functions he had assumed. He was short, though rather stocky, with a round boyish face. But there was a neatness and gentility in his dress, an intelligence in his conversation, and a dignity in his deportment, which at once commanded respect. A course of successful revival meetings being then in progress, he without a moment’s hesitation, consented to preach that (Saturday) evening. Nor was ever a sermon better adapted to an occasion. It was founded on the well known, and somewhat difficult text,—Luke xv. 7.; “I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.” After clearing up the difficulties of this

passage, by a method the most satisfactory to myself of any that I had ever heard adopted, he proceeded to inculcate, in a didactic way, the *Necessity of Repentance*, in a manner so simple, lucid, and faithful, as to furnish (I thought at the time) the best specimen of a gospel homily I had ever had the happiness of hearing. He preached the first two, of the three anniversary sermons delivered the next Sabbath day. These, though I had not the privilege of hearing them, being engaged out of town, I have reason to believe, were equally excellent and appropriate. His address in the social tea meeting, which followed on Monday evening, was indicative of deep seriousness and piety, as well as of superior ability. After his return from London, he remained with his family in our western capital till "Saturday, 18th of November, 1848," when he was "appointed to supply the place of the Rev. Lewis Warner," then laid up by disease, "on the Yonge Street Circuit." This event, together with the account of his labours in that portion of the Lord's vineyard, naturally belongs to the next chapter.

ITINERANT LIFE AND LABOURS.

His itinerant labours began, as we have seen, on the Yonge Street Circuit, to which he was sent by the Rev. JOHN RYERSON, Chairman of the Toronto District, to supply the place of the Rev. LEWIS WARNER, the then Superintendent of that Circuit, laid by from his work by severe indisposition. He went there, according to his own memoranda, "November 18th, 1848." His labours on this his first Circuit, and the estimation in which they were held, are well described in the following excellent letter from the Rev. Mr. WARNER, now Chairman of the Barrie District, to the compiler, which he gives entire, and without any remark of his own:—

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

"It affords me a kind of mournful pleasure to give you any information of one I so highly esteemed and so dearly loved, as the late Rev. A. S. BYRNE. Although I am painfully conscious of my inability to do justice to a being so gifted.

"I had the pleasure of hearing Mr. BYRNE preach shortly after his coming into the Province. His father, the Rev. CLAUDIUS BYRNE, being a friend of Dr. REID, of Thornhill, with his family, paid the Doctor a visit soon after arriving in Toronto. A strong desire having been manifested by many of our friends at Thornhill to hear so young a person preach, an appointment was announced. I went, expecting, from what I had heard, to hear emphatically a boy. His appearance confirmed my impressions. There he stood—a small, slight figure, boyishly dressed, with his shirt collar

turned down over a plain black cravat; and the head, though respectable, was by no means remarkable for intellectual developments; altogether he presented a fine specimen of a boy of sixteen.* Yet there was a shade of sadness, it might be of deep thought, on his countenance, which would have caused a careless observer to look again. The lining of the first hymn changed my impressions.—He read with calmness and propriety, and brought out its force and beauty with a correctness and power, that showed he possessed, not only an intimate acquaintance with the subject, but an appreciation of poetry far beyond his years. His prayer displayed a depth of religious experience, a correctness and expansion of thought, and a familiarity with public exercises, that quite astonished me. It was characterized by nearness of access, a consciousness of need, and a striving in faith, that the sins confessed might be forgiven, and that the blessings sought might be imparted. What a prayer from a child! The church, with her various institutions; the world, and all the nations thereof, passed in review before his mind. He seemed earnestly drawn out, that the whole earth might be filled with the glory of God. The sick and the distressed, the stranger and the fatherless, were all remembered, and blessings sought in their behalf which none but God can give.

* In two particulars the compiler cannot but think, his friend's impressions of Mr. BYRNE's personal appearance decidedly at fault. First, he describes him as "a small, slight figure." He was not tall, but, for his age, he is what we should call rather *stockey*. He says, "his head was by no means remarkable for intellectual developments." We neither know much about, nor attach much importance to phrenological prominences; but we know that he had a full, high forehead, which gradually widened to the top. And his head, as a whole, though without any remarkable prominences, was full on all sides, well balanced, and remarkably large. Twenty-two inches and a half is the average size of a man's head; but his could not have been less than twenty-four. The writer's head is twenty-two and a half, yet Mr. BYRNE's hat (as he knows by frequent experiment) would slip down on his face over both nose and ears.

“ I rose from my knees concluding that prayer was his fort. But the text was announced with the same calmness and dignified self-possession that had distinguished the first part of the service. It consisted of the following important words of scripture: ‘ For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.’ 1 Pet. iii. 18. The introduction was grave in thought, and correct and chaste in language. I give the division, which was natural and perfect:—

“ I. The Person who suffered;

“ II. The Persons for whom he suffered;

“ III. The Object for which he suffered.

I have regretted since his death, that I had not solicited him to write that sermon for me in full. I cannot pretend to do it justice, as I took no notes at the time; nor shall I attempt it. But there were some thoughts so beautiful and impressive, that I cannot forbear referring to them. After dwelling for some time with calm earnestness on the sufferings of our blessed Lord, sketching graphic and affecting pictures of the circumstances and scenery of his final passion, he said, ‘ He suffered from the hidings of his Heavenly Father’s face. It was,’ he continued, ‘ a source of comfort and encouragement to Christ when tabernacled in the flesh, that though despised and rejected of men, yet he could at all times turn away from a hostile and frowning world, and look up to an approving God, and enjoy the sustaining consciousness, that he was doing his will and acting under his authority. Desired he a consciousness of his Father’s concurrence when a babe he lay cradled in the manger at Bethlehem? He saw it in that mysterious star that guided the wise men to the place of his lonely birth, to present their worship and offerings. Looked he for some intimation of some benignity from the Heavenly

Throne, when he went down into the river Jordan and submitted to the rite of baptism? Behold the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God descending upon him like a dove, and resting upon him; while a voice from the excellent glory exclaims, 'This is my well beloved son in whom I am well pleased.' Asked he for supernatural interposition when on Tabor's Mount he spent that mysterious night in prayer? Lo, his disciples look upon him, and the fashion of his countenance is transfigured before them, and his raiment becomes radiant as the light, and the approving voice is heard again. Prays he for celestial manifestation when in the garden of Gethsemane he sweat great drops of blood falling down to the ground. 'There appeared an angel from heaven strengthening him.' But now is the hour and power of darkness. The people cry, 'Away with him!' He faints under the burthen of his cross—the multitude clamour for his blood—the soldiers transfix his limbs to the rugged wood—and the heavens gather darkness above him. While thus sinking under the pressure of that awful weight, *the sin of all*, he turns his anxious gaze to the throne of mercy, and expects to meet the approving eye of his Father, and to catch a beam of sympathy and encouragement. But the heavens are brass: no Father's smile he sees—no angel voice he hears; and turning away from the heaven of his former access and former consolation, he shrieks, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!'

"The effect upon the audience cannot be described. His manner, which at the first was calm and passionless, had been gradually growing warmer and more earnest, till he approached this part of the subject. His voice, as well as manner, gave indication of a mind labouring with suppressed emotion. The expression of sadness which I had

at first remarked became sterner and more severe, till it settled into a look of intense anguish. His voice grew deeper and more tremulous at times till quite low. He sustained it by a strong effort through a description of the last mysterious scene; and then burst that wild, wailing cry, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!' The unmitigated anguish of a bursting heart seemed embodied in that one piercing cry.

"Soon after my first interview with him, he unfolded to me his views of the ministry; and his desire, if the Conference would receive him, to devote his life to the service of the church in Canada. During the same week, that I had the first conversation with him, I was laid aside from the itinerant work by an illness so severe, that my physicians and friends despaired of my recovery. The official members of the Yonge Street Circuit met to consult on what was to be done in this emergency; and a resolution was passed recommending the Chairman of the District to employ Brother BYRNE to fill my appointments for at least one quarter. How he discharged his duties I need not relate. His labours still live in the affectionate remembrance of all who came within their sphere. The longer he remained on the Circuit the higher he rose in the esteem of the church. And for six months he performed the duties of a travelling preacher on that Circuit with great acceptability and usefulness, preaching to large and admiring audiences the 'unsearchable riches of Christ.'

"So soon as my health permitted of my going out, we became daily companions; and I had, I presume, more frequent opportunities than any other minister of hearing him preach. I never heard from him what could be called an ordinary sermon: all were superior, both in 'thought and style. He never seemed at a loss; and would never

consent, without much entreaty, to preach the same sermon in my hearing which he had preached before me.

“He was entirely original. Give him but retirement, the Bible, and some commentator, (he preferred Henry) from which to gather materials, and he would come forth from that retirement with a sermon replete with deep, powerful, and persuasive thought, conveyed in words the most appropriate that our language supplies. Yet he did not commit his sermons to memory; for in preaching from the same text at different times, he was far from using the same language. Words with him were emphatically what philosophers have defined them, ‘the signs of our ideas,’ always just; and as chaste and euphonious as the most elaborate composition. They fell from his lips with the ease and indifference of the most unrestrained conversation. Knowing no paucity of words, he was still sparing in their use—every one was part of a thought. There was never any effort after rhetorical effect—no attempt at poetic display. At times his illustrations would be filled with the most gorgeous imagery, and glow with the most genuine poetry; but it was only the out-breakings of a soul surcharged with the most beautiful thoughts and the loftiest conceptions. It would have been more difficult for him to suppress than it was to produce them. His eloquence consisted in the vigour, freshness, and justness of the thought. ’Twas what a great writer calls, ‘Logic on fire.’ He possessed in an eminent degree, that highest perfection of oratory, the ability of withdrawing the attention of the audience from himself and fastening it on the subject. This, in his case, was no small achievement: it required peculiar attractiveness in the discourse to call off the thoughts from the inspired boy who was delivering it.

“In hopes of recruiting our health, for even then his

constitution was far from being sound, I proposed a journey to the Falls in the month of May. There his pulpit ministrations were highly esteemed; and, although the Stamford Circuit has been favoured with some of our ablest ministers, the friends declared to me, that they had not heard his equal as a preacher in that part of the country.

“Being recommended as a candidate for the ministry by the Quarterly Meeting of the Yonge Street Circuit, he was proposed at the District Meeting, May 30th, 1849. In proposing him, I stated, what appeared greatly to startle some of the ministers who knew nothing of Mr. BYRNE, that he was in my opinion, the most talented person of his age in the world; and it was thought the expression needed qualifying. But from what I have seen and heard of others, I am still of the opinion, that no other person has ever at the age of sixteen arrived at the perfection he did as a pulpit orator. Oratory, however, was his least praise; his earnest and enlightened zeal for the salvation of mankind declared him to be deeply imbued with the spirit and wisdom of Christ. Other young christians may often be as zealous in obeying the command of the apostle, ‘Be instant in season and out of season;’ but they are seldom so consistent, and still less frequently so judicious. His piety seemed subject to none of the fluctuations of emotions and purposes which usually mark the religious experience of young persons. He appeared like an aged pilgrim, the waywardness and passion of whose youth had been chastened and purified by affliction, and whose affections by long continued effort and deep experience were fastened on heaven with a tenacity which smiles at the efforts of earth to disengage them; and who has struggled up above the clouds, mists, and doubts of this lower world, and has reached that clearer atmosphere that floats around Pisga’s

top, enabling him to view with serene joy the fertile hills and valleys of the heavenly Canaan, beyond the swellings of Jordan.

“I knew him from his first coming to this country. We travelled, and lodged, and conversed, and worshipped together. I loved him as a child, and I believe the affection was reciprocated. I never saw anything wrong in his spirit or conduct: and I can bear my humble testimony, that whilst I knew him, he was one of the most faultless of characters. Little did I think when I parted with him after the Conference, when he received his appointment to London, that I should see him on earth no more. In his death the church militant has lost a most brilliant ornament, but in the church triumphant, he will shine with a still brighter and purer light.

““ Revolving his mysterious lot,
 I mourn him, but I praise him not—
 To God the praise be given ;
 Who sent him like the radiant bow,
 His covenant of peace to show,
 Athwart the passing storm to glow—
 Then vanish into heaven.
 O Church, to whom the youth was dear,
 The angel of thy mercies here,
 Behold the path he trod !
 A milky-way through midnight skies.
 Behold the grave in which he lies !
 E'en from the dust the prophet cries,
 Prepare to meet thy God ! ”

“Respectfully Yours,

“ L. WARNER.

“ WESLEYAN PARSONAGE,

“ *Barrie, Sept. 20th, 1851.* ”

The excellent letter given above, supercedes the necessity of any remarks from the biographer on the first year of Mr.

BYRNE'S itinerant life, or, more properly, the first portion of a year he spent upon a Circuit. The last Lord's-day of that year, or the Conference Sabbath, June the 10th, it appears from his "Rememberancer," as he called it, of sermons preached, he assisted in supplying the pulpits of the East Toronto City Circuit. During the following week he came up to the Conference, which was holding its sessions in the City of Hamilton; and was appointed to preach on the evening of Tuesday, the 12th, which he did, before a large concourse of persons, including many of the ministers of the connexion. His subject was the "Spirit of adoption," from Galatians, iv. & 6. The writer was not present, being otherwise employed that evening, but he heard a number of the brethren, who did hear him, express their admiration of the composure,—simple, dignified ability, and power, with which such a mere boy was enabled to speak on such an occasion. And he has reason to know, that that sermon, and the two he preached in the same pulpit the Sunday following, were also highly appreciated by the intelligent persons who comprise the Wesleyan congregation in that city.

LONDON CIRCUIT.

At that Conference, as has been intimated in Mr. WARNER'S letter, at the earnest request of the biographer, who knew how acceptable the appointment would be to the people, Mr. B. was designated to London Town as his colleague for the ensuing ecclesiastical year. The town had been for some years previous only a station for one minister; but it had been decided at the May District Meeting, with a view of extending the work, to throw it again into the Circuit form, by attaching several country places to it. Some of these were difficult of access and far from town,

comprising several new settlements, thus forming a very laborious pastoral charge for two preachers not less than thirty-five miles in length.

At this arduous and toilsome field of labour he arrived on the evening of June the 30th—having spent the preceding Sabbath in Toronto, where he preached twice—so much in request were his ministrations in all places at all times, and so willingly was he to respond to every call inviting him to the performance of that work to which he felt he was Divinely designated. The day after his arrival in London, which was Sabbath, July the 1st, he opened his commission in that town, by delivering two impressive sermons from the two following texts of Holy Scripture: namely, in the morning, from 1 Peter, ii. 9., “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; and in the evening, from Ephesians, ii. 13., “But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” These sermons, the writer is inclined to think, were *unwritten*; for, although they were considered very able and made a deep impression, yet he has not been able to find even a skeleton of either among Mr. BYRNE’S papers.

As the superintendency devolved on the writer, and as he had been the year preceding in London, he left Mr. B. in the town for the next Sabbath also, and employed this fortnight in the country organizing the Circuit. “A fortnight *in*, and a fortnight *out*, constituted the plan of interchange for the rest of the year. The superintendent, on his return to town, found that his young colleague had, in the short space of two weeks, won for himself golden opinions. Indeed, his reception and popularity,

allowing for the difference of population, reminded him of what he had heard and read of the multitudes who flocked to hear the lamented SUMMERFIELD in New York. Nor did those golden opinions ever become tarnished at any subsequent period of his stay ; but wore brighter and brighter. This was evinced by the fact, that the announcement of his name for any special service would procure for us a larger congregation and collection, than the services of any living man we could get, however celebrated.

And it must be admitted, that he was fully entitled to all the love and esteem which were accorded to him. He was modest and unassuming in his demeanour ; condescending to the poorest ; and very thorough and methodical in pastoral visitations, both to sick and well : spending nearly every week-day afternoon, when at leisure, in this delightful and important employment—economizing the time and travel, by proceeding regularly *up* one side of a street and *down* the other, “going into every house,” of hearer or member, “in order.” He was truly studious : though not wedded to books, like some intellectual men, but perfectly accessible to any person at any time ; and seemed to act on the maxim of our excellent discipline, that “Gaining knowledge is a good work, but saving souls is a better.” Notwithstanding the exquisite sensibility and refinement of his nature made him to shrink from many things he had to meet with in the country, yet he cheerfully bore it as his cross ; and was most assiduously faithful to his appointments and to every thing connected with the thorough working of the Circuit. A more obedient junior preacher never existed ; as he made conscience of fulfilling the requisitions of his superintendent to the very letter. Nor were his labours in vain in the Lord ;

but there was a steady, progressive work of God, both in town and country, throughout the year, which resulted in a very improved state of religious feeling, and a very considerable net increase in the number of members. No less than three new classes were formed in previously neglected neighbourhoods.

His boarding was provided for, by three pious families, taking him as an inmate each of them a proportionate part of the year, without any outlay of money by the Circuit Stewards. To this arrangement he submitted in a spirit and manner which might be instructive to many young preachers of much inferior calibre. But this humility and alacrity in accommodating himself to circumstances was not unappreciated by the people in the Circuit; for though the Steward's accounts showed a deficiency of a few pounds on his salary at the District Meeting, this was more than made up, and sent to him after he had removed from the Circuit. Besides this, many other private acts and tokens of friendship showed the high estimation in which he was held.

During the winter of this Conference year he went to a number of places to preach Missionary Sermons; and he was one of the Deputation to hold Missionary Meetings in several Circuits. In all of which instances, his ministrations were listened to with the most admiring attention, and attended with the richest unction from above. On the platform, he was able, eloquent, and very effective.

It is, however, a mournful consideration, that in one of these towns he met with a damp bed, which, it is supposed, was the originating cause of his early death. Although few persons knew it, so uncomplaining was his manner, yet he was never after perfectly well. It is to be hoped, that the addition of this precious victim to the deadly ten-

dencies of a long unoccupied bed, when not thoroughly dried, will remind those who "entertain strangers" of the necessity of taking proper precautions to prevent the recurrence of any more such lamentable fatalities in the future.

The last Sabbath of this year, before the District Meeting, he spent among the truly amiable Methodist people of St. Thomas, when he preached one of the anniversary sermons in behalf of the flourishing Wesleyan Sabbath School which then existed in that interesting town. He had preached several times during the year to the friends in that place; and always with unbounded pleasure and approval on their part; but never more so than on the occasion referred to, although he was labouring even then under the depressing, prostrating, incipient attacks of that disease which afterwards laid him low. The Meeting of the District taking place during the course of that week in St. Thomas, he consequently continued throughout the intervening time; and was treated with the greatest hospitality and kindness by the considerate Wesleyan people of that place. At the examinations preparatory to the meeting referred to, which took place the day before, he so acquitted himself, in the accomplishment of his yearly course, indisposed as he was, as to excite astonishment and produce delight in the minds of his senior brethren. His responses exhibited, not only study and correctness, but originality and grasp of mind.

In that delicate state of health he remained at his post in London, while his superintendent was absent at the ensuing Conference, never once pleading his infirmities, as most young men would have done, as a reason for spending the interval with his friends; and continued during the period of Conference session to preach no less than seven times. Indeed, he seemed incapable of rest, while he was at all

able to labour, and any thing was to be done in his Masters's work. During the very few days he spent with his friends in Brantford, we find him occupying the pulpit once.

The writer had the pleasure of seeing him in that town on his return to London for the third year, on the 28th of June, having been detained in the lower part of the Province about two weeks after the rise of Conference. Mr. BYRNE had anticipated the pleasure of spending several days longer in the society of his parents and friends; but a summons from the Superintendent of the East Toronto City Circuit, to which Mr. B. had been appointed by the recent Conference, urging the necessity of his being there the following Sabbath, was promptly responded to by this ever willing servant of the Lord. The last sight of him the writer ever had, was that afternoon, in the coach, in which he was rolling away towards what proved to be his *last Circuit*.

TORONTO CITY EAST CIRCUIT.

Three days after his departure from Brantford, we find from his "Remembrancer of Preaching," that he opened his commission in the *Toronto East Circuit*, by bespeaking the people's prayers, from that appropriate text, Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, third chapter, and the first verse. The delivery of this sermon, in the Adelaide Street Church, was attended, we are told by an intelligent and pious gentleman who was present on the occasion, by a large concourse of persons, and among the rest, several members of the Legislature, then in session in Toronto; all of whom listened to it with that fixed and admiring attention its merits, both as to matter and delivery, so justly deserved. It might be a matter of lawful curiosity to

some, to know how much preparation, in the way of writing at least, such a sermon as many will remember that to have been, cost this youthful divine. The writer is pleased, that he has it in his power to gratify this innocent wish, by here transcribing his notes, all he ever wrote on that text *verbatim et literatim*. The text, we have said, was from 2 Thess., iii. 1., “Finally, bretheren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you.” The sermon, the mere outline of which is all we have to give, he entitled,

“THE GOSPEL EXTENDED BY THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS.”

“Though surrounded by many cheerless circumstances, Paul had a strong hold in the church militant.

“I.—THE OBJECT PROPOSED.

“The object is twofold.

“1. *That the word of the Lord may run, or have ‘free course.’*

“2. *That it may ‘be glorified.’*

“II.—THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH’S PRAYERS.

“1. *Peculiar promises are made concerning their prayers.*

“2. *They are influenced by great zeal for the salvation of souls.*

“3. *They have more faith.*

“4. *They have greater affection for ministers.*

“5. *They are more interested in the establishment of the Redeemer’s Kingdom.*

“III.—ENFORCE THE EXHORTATION—

“‘Finally, brethren, pray for us.’”

Although his health was such, that he knew, if we may judge from a hint thrown out in the hearing of some friends, that his days were nearly numbered, yet he entered upon the work of the Circuit—study, preaching, attending class and prayer-meeting, and visiting from house to house, with the intention of fulfilling the purpose, orally expressed by him on the occasion referred to, of *preaching while he lived*. Of his studies, if we may judge from the plan of his sermonizing for that year, we may say, they were methodical and thorough. The *plan* to which we refer, is found in a manuscript-book of his, entitled, “Sermons by ALEX. S. BYRNE, commenced on the Toronto East Circuit, C. W., July, 1850. ‘Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of God.’ 2 Tim., ii. 15.

“The order observed in the composition of these discourses shall be—

- “1. Selection of Text.
- “2. Designation of the Subject.
- “3. The Division.
- “4. The Connexion.
- “5. Meditation on the Passage.
- “6. Examine Commentaries and the Original.
- “7. Collect all the passages of Scripture which bear upon the Subject.
- “8. The Sub-Division.
- “9. The Discussion.
- “10. The ‘Peroration.’
- “11. The ‘Exordium.’”

Besides the most assiduous attention to every part of his ministerial work, about his fidelity in which there was but

one opinion among those who shared the burden of those labours, or their benefit, he found time for corresponding with a few acquaintances in the Circuit from which he had lately removed, as well as with his father's family, and friends whom he had left in Ireland. He was methodical and exact in this, as in every thing else, which will appear from the following list of "Correspondents," found in one of his memorandum books:—

- "1. Rev. CHARLES L. GRANT.
- "2. JOSEPH STEPHENSON, Esquire, Roan Mills.
- "3. Rev. ROBERT JOSSUP, Forsyth St., New York.
- "4. Mr. JAMES MOORE, Dungannon.
- "5. Mr. JOHN MURDOCH, Dungannon.
- "6. Mr. GEORGE BEAUMONT, Benburt.
- "7. Rev. CLAUDIUS BYRNE, Brantford.
- "8. Mr. JAMES DUNCAN, Dungannon.
- "9. Mr. GEORGE WHITEHOUSE, London.
- "10. Mr. JAMES OLIVER, London.
- "11. Mr. J. W. VAN WORMER, London.
- "12. Rev. S. NELLES, A. M., London.

A few short epistles from his pen have fallen into the compiler's hands, which he transcribes, as specimens of Mr B.'s easy and profitable manner of writing; as well also to supplement the narrative.

"MR. GEORGE WHITEHOUSE, London."

"Yorkville, 5th July, 1850.

"MY DEAR SIR,—

"Prompted not less by a sense of my extreme obligations to your kindness, than by a desire to fulfil my promise, I here send you a few lines. I was obliged to leave home for my station sooner than I expected, as it was necessary for me to preach here last Sabbath. So

you see, after all, I had not the pleasure of spending a Sunday at home. But I must be content. So far, my sphere of labour seems comfortable and prosperous. I am living with Rev. G. SANDERSON, in Yorkville, a village in the suburbs of the city. This is much more healthful and retired, than the confinement and bustle of Toronto. Mr. SANDERSON is not yet married: so that we keep a bachelor's hall. Oh! it is miserable to live without ladies. I hope we may not be long in this predicament.

"Would you have the kindness to inquire at the Post-Office, if there be any letters for me; and direct them to me, or enclose them with a line from yourself? Direct to the Wesleyan Book Room, No. 9, Wellington Buildings, King Street, Toronto. When I get better acquainted with the friends, I will write you again. I hope shortly to hear from you. May God pour down his Spirit abundantly on all our societies, the coming year! Present my warmest regards to Mrs. W. and every member of your dear family; Mr. and Mrs. GLASS; Mr. and Mrs. OLIVER; Mr. and Mrs. WIGMORE; Mrs. ANDERSON; Mr. and Mrs. ABBOTT; and all the 'old friends.'

"And believe me, dear Sir,

"Your most affectionate friend,

"A. S. BYRNE.

"MR. G. WHITEHOUSE."

The following note was addressed to a gentleman in whose house he found a comfortable home for several months of the preceding year. The estimable lady of this gentleman is not "a member of class;" and they have no children. The note seemed to have been enclosed in the same envelope with that to Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The above remarks are necessary to the understanding of

one or two things, playful and serious, in the letter itself; and to account for the following humorous inscription on its back:—

“MR. JOHN WESLEY VAN WORMER,

“At the Old Wesleyan Methodist Vicarage,

“London, C. W.”

“Yorkville, 5th July, 1850.

“MY DEAR SIR,—

“I here enclose a few lines to say, that I have arrived at my station in safety. I am living with Rev. G SANDERSON, Editor of the Christian Guardian. He has taken a beautiful cottage in Yorkville, about a mile from the city. The situation is very agreeable and healthy; but, alas! we have no ladies. Mr. SANDERSON is not yet married. Do you mind?

I hope you are living near to God, in regular attendance on the means of grace. Without diligence in this matter, we must decline in the divine life. I shall never forget the happy, peaceful hours I spent in the beautiful vicarage; nor the kind attention and care I experienced while living with you. I pray God, my dear friend, that those pleasures may be consummated in the joys of an everlasting glory. Our society in this Circuit appears interesting and prosperous; and in reliance on divine grace, we anticipate a blessed year. I hope you may have the same in London. Look unto Jesus. Remember me affectionately to Mrs. VAN WORMER, and all the children. Tell Mrs. V., I wish she would meet in class.

“Believe me, dear Sir,

“Your sincere friend,

“A. S. BYRNE.

“MR. VAN ———.

“P.S.—Mr. WHITEHOUSE will give you my address.”

The two letters which occur next, were addressed to individuals possessed of many excellencies, and for whom Mr. B. entertained a high regard; but whom, he feared, were living beneath their religious privilege. The close and faithful manner in which he writes to these intimate friends, speaks well for his conscientiousness and fidelity.

“Mr. ———, Dundas Street, London.”

“Yorkville, 22nd July, 1851.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—

“I write you a few lines, not only because I promised to do so; but because I am deeply interested in your welfare. I have thought anxiously concerning you, when none could read my feelings but the Infinite Searcher of hearts. You know how often I faithfully opened my mind on spiritual things. And though now removed in person, I would with pen and ink enforce the same important truths. You want more decision of purpose; and it is the want of this that keeps you out of God. The spirit of conviction has been operating graciously upon your heart; nor are you obstinately disposed to reject salvation. But you want the prompt determination of the returning prodigal, when he said, ‘*I will* arise and go to my father.’ When you overcome this evil, I fear not for your acceptance with God. I intend to write you a much longer letter on these subjects. Time prevents me now. Remember me affectionately to Mrs. ——— and family; and to Miss D——.

“May God bless you and yours! is the fervent prayer, of yours, most sincerely,

“A. S. BYRNE.”

“Mr. ———, London.”

“MY DEAR SIR,—

“I have not forgotten you. Your character ranks among that rare class, whom I always regard with feelings of affectionate though painful interest. I think you have, not only an Irish, but, may I not say a Methodist heart? and I write you this short note, to remind you of an incumbent duty which I frequently and earnestly urged upon you—that you should give yourself up fully to God. Renounce every *besetting* sin; and embrace *all* the privileges of His church! The salvation of your own soul demands this. The comfort and prosperity of your interesting family demand it. The satisfaction of your interesting partner, and the prayers and anxieties of your friends in the family of Christ demand it. I think of you at a throne of grace.

O, my dear friend, let me entreat you to exercise decision of purpose in the things which make for your peace. I know you have an attachment to the cause and the people of God. But this will never atone for negligence concerning inward holiness. May God bless you, and lead you to himself! I would be glad to hear from you occasionally. Mr. WHITEHOUSE will tell you my address. Remember me affectionately to Mrs. ——— and every member of your dear family; and believe me,

“Yours, truly,

“A. S. BYRNE.

“Mr. ———.”

The following letter, addressed to his little brother, is at once a refreshing instance of fraternal piety, and a worthy model for those who would recommend religion to the young:—

“Master FRANCIS BYRNE.”

“Yorkville, 27th Aug., 1850.

“DEAR FRANCIS,—

“Allow me, as one who loves your soul and is deeply interested in your happiness, to write you a few lines on subjects of great importance. Although I have not so much experience in the world, and therefore am not able to give you such wise counsels, as your dear Father and Mother; perhaps the more familiar advice of a Brother, might, with God’s blessing, have some good effect upon your mind. You are fast approaching the age when you must exchange the studies of the school, and the playful days of your home, for the business and temptations of this wicked world. Now, I cannot say in what branch of business or profession God designs you to engage; but I would just remind you of a few things too important to be neglected in any sphere of life in which we may move. I say ‘remind,’ for what I am going to say, you have often heard enforced upon you by your loving and pious parents. First, I would say, pray God that he might give you a *new heart*. You know what I mean by this. I do not refer to the heart of your body: that organ which you feel beating on the left side of your chest, and which is the seat of life. This is a very good heart, it needs no change. It is made of flesh; and because flesh is matter, it cannot sin, and therefore does not need to be made holy. You know nothing can be sinful, or commit sin, or be punished for sin justly, which has not a soul. Neither wood, nor stone, nor beasts can sin. But man has a soul. You cannot see it; for it is spiritual: just as you cannot see the wind. I cannot tell you what a soul is. But you have one; and so has every man, woman, and child, which God has created. Moses will tell you in the book of Genesis, the

second chapter, the 7th verse, how this soul was given to man. God said to Adam, 'Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' Adam disobeyed this law. But his body did not die. How then did he die? In two ways. He lost the life of God out of his soul, which was holiness; and he was in danger of hell. Then his soul, or his heart as we say, figuratively, became sinful. He loved God no more. He delighted to do his will no more. Now we all derive from Adam a sinful nature. Read the 12th verse of the fifth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. If we die with this nature unchanged, we shall be punished forever in hell. If our sins be pardoned and our hearts made holy, God will take us to heaven. He sent Jesus Christ into our world, who died in our stead; and made it possible for us to be saved. Read the 16th verse of the third chapter of St. John's Gospel. If Jesus Christ had not died, our sin would not have been our fault; but by his death he has procured grace for us all. And if we do not pray for this grace, we must perish. O! Francis, it is an awful thing to perish. Pray God to 'create in you a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within you.' I will write you more at another time. I have written this in a simple style, and a plain hand, that you may understand it. Now, read it attentively; and then go to your room, and shut your door, and pray God, by his spirit, to convince you of sin. The Lord bless you! so prays,

"Your affectionate brother,

"A. S. BYRNE.

"Mr. F. BYRNE."

This letter, which we follow with but one more, it is to be believed, had a useful effect; as we have reason to hope,

that the lad to whom it was written, is now walking in the path his brother trod. May he be as faithful to the end! The letter subjoined is interesting, as having been written after the first serious attack of that disease, which soon after laid him aside from his beloved work; and as consequently evincing his state of mind under those affecting circumstances.

It is addressed to "Mr. G. WHITEHOUSE, of London," and dated, "Yorkville, 16th Sep., 1850."

"MY DEAR SIR,—

"I was glad to meet my esteemed friend, Mr. TYAS, in Adelaide St. Church yesterday morning; but doubly so, when I found that he was the bearer of an affectionate communication from you. My joy was not less on hearing of your gracious recovery, than was my sorrow on hearing of your recent illness. May God prolong your valuable life to his church, your family, and the good of those around you!

"I am highly gratified to hear of the prosperity of your church. I need scarcely tell you the deep interest I feel in it. May your Shiloh be ever the seat of tranquillity and joy! And upon you, may God 'command the blessing, even life forevermore!'

"My health has been very bad of late. I have been the victim of severe liver-affection. But by the good providence of God, under the treatment of a kind medical friend here, I hope soon to recover. Oh, how these vile bodies affect the immortal part! Thank God, though they damp feelings, they cannot shake principles; and one day they shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. Let us wait and hope this glorious ultimatum of our warfare. Scarcity of time, holds my pen within the

bounds of this sheet. But you know my heart. Remember me in love to all the dear friends, especially Mrs. M. and family. Tell Mr. WIGMORE, I visited his brother; and found him well.

“Believe me, dear Sir,

“Yours, as ever, in Christ,

“A. S. BYRNE.

“Mr. G. WHITEHOUSE.”

This letter was written near the close of his distinguished public career. After this he preached but *five* times in all. His last sermon was delivered in Yorkville, October the 10th, from Psalm xix. 11. The last skeleton he wrote (in pencil mark) was entitled, “Christ ‘precious’ to the believer,” and dated October 12th, 1850. Thus ended the labours of one, of whom his sober and enlightened, *last* superintendent, the Rev. JOHN RYERSON, says, “It would be easy to pass *high* encomiums (and do it in truth) on the varied excellencies and singular endowments of this young man; whose ‘praise,’ as far as he was known, was in all ‘the churches;’ and who was so early and mysteriously taken from us.”

HIS LAST SICKNESS AND DEATH.

The reader has already learned, that for at least six months before the date of the last letter given above, in which he states a partial recovery from a late attack of liver-affection, he had been more or less under the influence of disease. But from the period of the attack referred to in the letter just mentioned, he continued to sink more visibly, till death terminated his sufferings. The progress of his final illness shall be told substantially in the words of his affectionate father, who was more particularly acquainted with every phasis the disease assumed; and who must be supposed to have watched every symptom with the most anxious solicitude. In quoting from his manuscript, one or two things may be mentioned which we had in substance stated before; but if so, they will be also diversified and confirmed.

The elder Mr. BYRNE remarks, "When he was appointed to the Toronto Circuit, and passing through the town [Brantford] for his new station, I did not fully like his appearance; although he was not disposed then to complain, but regarded himself competent for his work. Accordingly he left home in anticipation of increasing usefulness. Early in the fall, very unfavourable symptoms commenced showing themselves. He rested for about three weeks; and then resumed his Circuit engagements—assuring me and his mother, that he felt himself adequate to his duties. The following week he was attacked violently with dysentery. This species of disease, after some time, appeared to be considerably conquered, by the treatment of Dr. Robinson, of Toronto; whose unremitting

attention to him for nearly six weeks, showed his christian anxiety, if possible, to be the instrument in the hands of God, of preserving so valuable a life. We shall ever remember with emotions of gratitude, the generous attendance of this kind-hearted gentleman. As it was then hoped, that he was in a state of convalescence, we brought him home; in expectation that a change of air and scenery, would contribute to a speedy recovery.

“For two weeks or so, after his return, we were beginning to be sanguine of his final restoration to health. But, alas, how mistaken! The short, dry cough, the frequent hectic flush, the heavy night perspirations, the quickened pulsation, the almost total loss of appetite, were to me indications, that the relentless dart was penetrating the organs of vitality; and that his mortal career was hastening to a close. During this season of increasing suffering, a murmur never escaped his lips—his mind was constantly stayed on God. From the influence of medicine, designed to mitigate his pain, (which, thank God, at no period was excessive) his mind, naturally tending to sombriety, was not the subject of extraordinary emotions of joy. He was possessed of settled peace.

“A letter from the Rev. J. CARROLL, who had been his superintendent on the London Circuit, was read to him by his esteemed friend Mr. WHITEHOUSE, of London, (a gentleman, who, though undiplomied, is very skilful in the healing art); who had kindly come to see him, and to ascertain if it were possible for him to render the sufferer any assistance. We shall not soon forget how his fine intelligent eyes, now sinking in their sockets, were fastened upon the reader, while the accents of the reader’s voice scarcely penetrated the organs of hearing, which were now beginning to be so enervated, that it required a special

effort on his part to catch every syllable. His feelings of gratitude for the author of this more than ordinarily affectionate production was evinced, by his calling for the letter a short time before his release, and holding it in his hand with a firm grasp.*

“The Sunday prior to his departure he said to me, in a tone and with an emphasis I can never forget, ‘The name of Jesus is delightful.’ He lingered all day on Monday; and towards the evening of that day, he wandered a little. But all his sayings during his slight aberrations showed most clearly, that his soul was in his hallowed work to the last. He frequently referred to his

* As it has been the earnest request of the father of the deceased, that this letter should be published; and as it expresses the writer’s sentiments towards one whom he had the best means of knowing, he is induced to give it, in this note form, *unaltered*, though written in a few hurried moments while the bearer was waiting for the coach.

“London, Feb. 8, 1851.

“MY DEAR, AFFLICTED YOUNG BROTHER,—

“Being informed, that Mr. WHITEHOUSE is to start in a few hours to see you in Brantford, I avail myself of his going, to drop you a line. I have often purposed it before, but my many engagements led me to defer it. I am impelled from the accounts I have received, though unusually busy to-day, to delay no longer. It is with extreme regret, that I, and many others here, where your ministry is so much esteemed, have learned of your inability to prosecute your work; and that it is doubtful whether you will ever be able to resume it. To me it is very mysterious, that *you*, so young and promising, should be laid by; while *I* should be suffered to exercise my feeble, clumsy ministry.

“‘God’s thoughts,’ however, ‘are not as ours;’ and ‘though darkness and clouds are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.’ What he does we ‘know not now, but we shall know hereafter.’ God is not dependent on any of us; for, ‘though he buries his workmen, he carries on his work.’ I hope, my dear Brother, you are resigning yourself to the will of God; and that you are casting all your care upon him (?). I think you are not constitutionally sanguine—perhaps I might venture to say, you are constitutionally desponding; or at least, more inclined to look on the *dark* than on the *bright* side of things. But, O! my dear youthful sufferer, though tried in the furnace, encourage yourself in your God, who is all goodness, and faithfulness, and power. Honour him with a simple, direct, and unshaken reliance on his mercy and fidelity. ‘Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.’ ‘May God sanctify you wholly! And may your body, soul, and spirit, be preserved blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!’ But why do I talk of a *dark side* in your case at all? Surely it is *all bright*. It is not impossible with God, that you may be raised up from ‘the gates of the grave.’ I pray earnestly, that our friend W.’s acknowledged skill may, under the Divine blessing, avail to your restoration to health and many years of active, successful labour in the Master’s cause. And if not, the Church’s loss will be your infinite gain. What a source of consolation to you, that

horse; the preparing of his valise; and the filling of tickets for the members of the church. Of him it may be truly said, that with his latest breath he ‘gaspèd the name’ of Jesus. The week previous to his demise, our family was favoured with a short but most profitable visit from the Rev. ENOCH WOOD, returning to Toronto from official engagements in the West. In answer to affectionate inquiries from that truly sympathizing man of God, our dear boy replied, ‘I have no extatic joy; but I have peace, and lie in the hands of God submissively.’ If these are not his identical words, they are critically the substance of them. Our friend, before he left us, engaged in prayer with the family; truly it was a sweet season of access to the throne of grace; and cheering was the influence of the Divine presence that remained when he retired, at the call of the driver of the stage, which had been waiting for him at the door.

you were led to ‘remember your Creator’ in the days of childhood; and that, though now so very young, you have had the privilege of crying, ‘Behold the Lamb!’ so long and so successfully. If you die now, you will not have lived in vain. Your Divine Master will surely sustain you in the ‘swellings of Jordan;’ and ‘an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto you, into the everlasting kingdom of your God and Saviour Jesus Christ.’ And, oh! think of the bliss and rapture of joining—

‘A world of spirits bright,
 Who taste the pleasures there;
 They all are robed in spotless white,
 And conquering palms they bear:
 Adorned by their Redeemer’s grace
 They close pursue the Lamb;
 And every shining front displays
 The unutterable name.’

God bless you! I rather envy you, than mourn for you. For your dear, anxious parents, I feel that I have most cause to sorrow. But if you go first, that will be another tie to heaven; and another stimulus to their exertions to reach that blissful shore. May the Almighty support them; and prepare them for every cup they may be called to drink! Give them my kind and sympathizing regards. Mrs. Carroll (and even little Mary) wish to be remembered kindly to you. If you gain the blest shore before I do, still look out for the coming of an unworthy friend. I never tried harder, nor with more success, for entire consecration to God than the present year. Br. WHITEHOUSE will give you all the news. Adieu!

“JOHN CARROLL.

“REV. A. S. BYRNE.”

“Here I should gratefully mention, that the frequent visits of the Rev. PETER JONES during the latter days of our dear son’s illness, were always grateful to him, and consoling to the family. The beautiful simplicity of this native minister’s prayers, were a balm to his spirit.

“On Tuesday morning, February 11, 1851, at about one o’clock, the awful crisis seemed rapidly approaching. His pulse at this time ceased from its feverish rapidity; and I knew the struggle would soon be over. His reason, but slightly affected at any time, now appeared to fully resume its seat. The family, with four affectionate members of the church, who remained with us throughout that anxious night, engaged in prayer. We commended his spirit to Him, who had only lent this precious child to us for a season. When we arose from our knees, being perfectly composed and re-collected, he said, ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth,’ which he repeated several times. Other sentences, which had reference to the Lord Jesus, he endeavoured to utter; but, the ‘weary wheels of life’ being then nearly motionless, he failed in articulating them. After this, he turned on his back; stretched himself at length; reclined his head on the pillow; and, placing his hands across upon his breast, he sweetly fell asleep in those everlasting arms, which during his protracted illness were so graciously around and beneath him. Thus concluded the earthly career of one of the most amiable of children, whom I fondly hoped would have been long spared to proclaim the great salvation when my bones should be mouldering in ‘the house appointed for all living.’ But the ‘Lord of all,’ has in his inscrutable wisdom and unfathomable love, ordered it otherwise. Deeply are we, his bereaved parents, persuaded, that our Heavenly Father hath done all things well; and, therefore,

by his consoling grace, we from our hearts are enabled to say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

The writer of this work was written to at once by the father of the deceased to attend his funeral; but being absent from home, attending missionary meetings, the letter did not reach him till the very day on which his friend was interred. Unavoidable circumstances also prevented the Rev. Mr. WOOD and the Rev. JOHN RYERSON, who had been summoned to attend his obsequies, from being present. Their lack of service, however, was ably supplied by others.

We give a description of the funeral services from the pen of the Rev. G. R. SANDERSON, then Editor of the *Christian Guardian*. After a slight sketch of his life and labours, he says:—

"From the letter of a correspondent, we learn that the funeral of our departed and lamented brother took place on Thursday last. The cortége proceeded from the residence of his afflicted and bereaved parents to the Wesleyan Church-yard at Springfield. It was the largest funeral ever known in that section of the country.

"Early in the morning, the bell of the Town-Hall began to send forth its deep and solemn and dirge-like tones. At ten o'clock the church to which the body was to be borne, was crowded. The pulpit was clothed in mourning, and when the corpse was placed within the altar, the Rev. K. Creighton ascended the pulpit, and commenced the solemn services of the hour. His text was the last words of the dying servant of God, whose lifeless form was enclosed in the coffin before the audience, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' The sermon was an eloquent and powerful one, delivered by a man of God, who spoke to the deeply affected congregation as if from the interior of the tomb.

“From the church the cortége proceeded to the burial ground. The procession was arranged by Mr. BABCOCK, and was of unusual length, testifying respect to the memory of the departed, and sympathy with the afflicted family. The body being committed to its final resting place, the Rev. R. HEYLAND impressively read the funeral service, and the tomb closed over all that was mortal of one of the most promising and pious youthful ministers of the Wesleyan Church in Canada.”

Funeral sermons were preached in memory of his virtues, the first or second Sabbath after his death, in his late Circuit, in the two principal churches. The one in Yorkville, by the Rev. ENOCH WOOD, now President of the Conference; and the one in the Adelaide Street Church, in the City of Toronto, by the Rev. JOHN RYERSON, the President's Co-Delegate, who had been his last Superintendent. On Sunday, February the 23rd, the writer preached two sermons in improvement of the solemn dispensation from the pulpit in London, which the deceased had so ably and acceptably filled in his turn, for the space of a year: in the morning, from Heb. xi. 4.: “He being dead yet speaketh;” and in the evening to the young people, from the text which constitutes the motto in the title page, from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3.: “While he was yet young, he set his heart to seek after the God of David his father.” Large, highly respectable, and deeply affected congregations shewed their sorrow for losing him, by loud sobs and floods of tears; while the sable drapery in which the interior of the church was clad, portrayed the sadness of the occasion. But they did not sorrow as those without hope; and the sun-shine of sacred joy for his final triumph shone through their tears.

The young people of this congregation evinced their regret for his death, and their respect for his memory, by

placing in the church an elegant tablet of white marble, bordered with black, which bears the following inscription:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF THE
REV. ALEXANDER S. BYRNE,
SON OF THE
REV. CLAUDIUS BYRNE,
BORN IN DUNGANNON, IRELAND,
AND
DIED IN BRANTFORD, C. W.,
FEBRUARY 11TH, 1851,
AGED 18 YEARS, 8 MONTHS.

ERECTED AS A TRIBUTE TO EXTRAORDINARY
WORTH AND TALENTS,
BY THE
JUVENILE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION.

HEBREWS XI. 4.:
“*He being dead, yet speaketh.*”

The sorrow felt and expressed for his death was universal in all places where he was known. The following poetical tribute to his memory, from the pen of a highly respectable and pious professional gentleman, who knew and esteemed the family of Mr. BYRNE in Ireland, and who enjoyed this youthful preacher's ministrations on the Yonge Street Circuit, appeared in the columns of the *Guardian* for March 12th, 1851:—

“FRIENDSHIP’S TRIBUTE.

TO THE LATE REV. ALEXANDER S. BYRNE.

“Thou friend of mankind, though they soon may forget thee,
My muse shall her tribute of friendship record;
And my harp, though it mourn, with my theme shall enwrap me,
To sing of thy virtues and glorious reward:
But JEHOVAH alone, who illumin’d thy spirit,
Awhile to revolve in mortality’s sphere,
And gave thee so richly himself to inherit,
Can scan thy perfections and virtues while here.
I but sing of his grace, thy perfections inscribing
On memory’s tablet, secure to abide;

And JEHOVAH adore, while the tribute ascribing,
To virtue and worth which in thee did reside ;
With thy greatness of soul, and talents transcendent,
Humility, meekness, and patience combin'd :
While faith, hope, and charity reigned ascendant,
And with bright coruscations adorned thy mind.
Thus the bow on the cloud, and the rose in the valley,
Sublimely exhibit each softening ray ;
These speak the CREATOR, but thou as his ally,
The grace of thy SAVIOUR didst truly portray.
Munificent nature with lavish bestowment,
Enriched thee, to witness and honour her cause ;
But vastly surpassing each mental endowment,
Was thy hearty submission to piety's laws.
Angelic thy sojourn, divine thy commission,
Thy errand and message was mercy to man ;
And pregnant thy soul with the heav'n-born ambition,
To spread the glad tidings through every land.
The fire of thy word, while thy bones were consuming,
Give light and salvation, and life to the dead ;
And thy theme, and thy strain, so divinely alluring,
Won trophies around for thy great living Head.
Thy prophets of old, and apostles succeeding,
The signet of heaven their converts proclaim ;
And though, as by miracle, they be exceeding,
The fruit of thy labours shall ever remain.
Pure and spotless thy graces, much more thy example,
Where the youth and the sage were so nobly combin'd ;
And the fruits of thy life, so matur'd and so ample,
Approv'd thee the Christian completely refin'd.
The Chariots of Israel! of Israel! my brother,
I bid the farewell, while their rumbling I hear ;
May thy spirit and mantle descend on some other,
Whom the Church and the world may as truly revere.
In regions congenial thy soul is progressing
From glory to glory, through infinite years ;
And thy homage, and worship, thanksgiving, and blessing,
Forever outvie thy seraphic compeers.
Well tuned be thy lyre for the heavenly concert,
While mine on the willow doth pensively wave ;
And my muse, now bereft of her spiritual consort,
Shall silently trickle a tear on thy grave.

Thornhill, February 28, 1851."

The following letter of condolence from the compiler to the elder Mr. BYRNE, though written in haste, will perhaps furnish the best conclusion to this section, and transition to the next, we can make.

“London, Friday, 14th Feb., 1851.

“MY DEAR, BEREAVED BROTHER,—

“I arrived at home yesterday, after an absence of several days, and received your note of the 10th instant from the hand of Mr. WHITEHOUSE; who gave all the affecting, interesting particulars of your dear son's departure. You will perceive, that I did not know of his death till about the hour when you must have been attending his burial; to be present at that interesting solemnity was then impossible. This absence I feel deeply to regret. I would like to have gazed—

———‘On the beautiful clay,
The corpse when the spirit was fled,’

as some small compensation to my feelings for not having seen him in his last sickness; and to have tried to alleviate the burden of your grief, by sharing it with you. I am glad to perceive from the tone and temper of your letter, as well as to learn from the statements of Br. W——, that you and your dear family have met this dispensation in so submissive a spirit. I can perceive many reasons why the sunshine of holy joy may well gleam through the showers of nature's tears that are now streaming from your eyes. ‘To the righteous there ariseth light in the darkness.’ Not only is your ‘loss’ his infinite, eternal ‘gain;’ but it may, and will I trust, be gainful to you all. He has gone before you, like another Joseph, to welcome you hereafter to the land of eternal plenty. Heaven will be dearer to every one of you, now your dear ‘Alick’ is there. And thereby, for his own sake, I believe you would not call

him thence, if it were in your power. He was a being too ethereal and refined for this rude world. No more, will he meet the winter's blast—no more, will he traverse the gloomy forest—no more, will he endure the cheerless lodging—no more, will his sainted soul grapple with the powers of darkness; but his freed spirit now—

‘Claps the glad wings and towers away,
To mingle with the blaze of day!’

My own soul catches fire at the thought of finally meeting my late youthful colleague, having put off the harness myself, in that radiant, blissful world, where the toil-worn soldier of the cross shall rest forever in the enjoyment of his God.

“Though early bereaved, it will never be an unpleasant reflection, but a most agreeable one, that you have been the father of such a son. For, aside from his prodigious talents and extraordinary genius, he was one of the most faultless, religious characters I ever knew. I will not say he had no infirmities—that would be perhaps too much to say of *any mortal*; yet, if there was ever an instance of an individual's ‘failings leaning to virtue's side,’ he was the person. An apparent tenacity of his own opinion, with which some might charge him, arose from the decisive character of his views on all moral questions; and his scrupulosity in adhering to what he thought was right. Few persons, however, could maintain their conscientious convictions in a more becoming spirit and manner than he. In him there was a rare combination of talent and taste; of genius and judgment. Indeed, ‘take him all for all, we ne’er shall look upon his like again.’ * * * * *

“I am, with sentiments of sympathy with you and family, and in which Mrs. C. unites, your affectionate Brother,

“JOHN CARROLL.

“Rev. C. BYRNE, *Brantford.*”

MENTAL AND MORAL CHARACTER.

Chapters with such a heading as the above are in most biographical works very dull, from the formality with which they are drawn up; but the writer intends nothing formal in the present instance. It would be quite superfluous, for one reason, after the natural tendency, as he thinks, of the preceding sketch, to leave an impression of Mr. B.'s character on the reader's mind. It is therefore intended in this section only to glance at a few features in a miscellaneous way; and to close with a quotation from each of two documents which bear on the subject of his general character.

First, we have to observe of him, that he was a preacher *naturally*. He was not only early designated to the work by the Great Head of the Church, but he evidently had a great partiality for the vocation. Like Paul, he magnified his office. He is said to have had a partiality for this work from childhood. When quite a little boy, he would always claim the privilege of selecting the lessons and hymns for his father's junior colleagues, who usually resided in the family; and having been once put in possession of the subject or the text, his selections were always singularly appropriate. Often was he at an early age overheard by members of the family declaiming earnestly to the furniture of his room, arranged in the order of a congregation.

Another peculiarity was, his *excellence in prayer*: the solemnity of his manner, the fervour of his spirit, and the felicity of his expressions were quite remarkable; but he especially excelled in what might be called—*appropriate*

praying. His prayer was not about every thing else before he came to the matter in hand. A penetrating hearer might always predict the subject of the coming sermon from the opening prayer. This with him was a natural gift, which he had taken pains, in accordance with the opinions of some of the best divines, to improve. Among his papers are found a few written prayers on specific subjects, or for particular occasions. We must not be understood to say, that he studied his prayers—none possessed more abundantly the spirit of prayer; but we mean to assert, that he laboured to cultivate the gift he exercised on every sudden emergency with such remarkable facility and power.

He was *systematically studious*, but not *slavishly* so. His was not so much the system, that assigns such a particular subject to a particular hour of the day (although in this he was not wanting); but that systematic manner of examining a subject to the best advantage, which his original and philosophic mind enabled him to adopt instinctively. He did not receive implicitly every thing stated by a standard author. His searching mind perceived at a glance what might be urged on the other side of a given question; and he never held any opinion with comfort till he knew perfectly how to account for and defend it. The more difficulties there were in an inquiry, the more attractions it had for him; as it furnished the greater exercise for his active and powerful mind. He often complained, that he found the text books prescribed in the probationer's "course of study"—"too easy." His was not, however, the sort of mind for *business matters*, which, compared with his cleverness in other things, he was not quick in comprehending. He would have been rather the philosophic and intellectual, than the practical

man—so far, at least, as any thing aside from mere ministerial duty was concerned.

Considering his youth and the extreme modesty natural to him, his *moral courage* was truly admirable—as displayed in the composure with which he faced the largest congregations on the most important occasions, and the fearlessness with which he opposed and rebuked whatever was wrong in rich and poor, both publicly and privately. This led him *sometimes*, through his want of experience and knowledge of the manners and customs of this country, to unjust censures on individuals and communities, although his judgments were *usually* as just as they were wise. But along with this, strange as it may seem, he was rather wanting in *physical courage* than otherwise. His timidity of bodily danger prevented his being a skilful horseman; and exposed him to much mental suffering in performing the sometimes arduous journeys of a Methodist itinerant. The writer has since learned, that while with him in the London Circuit, Mr. BYRNE suffered excessively in mind, while performing some of the bush rides that we had to take in executing our work in that field of labour, from a fear of being attacked and devoured by wolves.* In all these infirmities of the man, the principles of the christian sustained him.

His *humility and aversion to notoriety* were *uncommon*. This was manifested in one instance in a way we regret; as, but for his decision in this case, the biographer might have been able to present his readers with what now must ever remain a desideratum: viz., his *personal portrait*,

* His want of what might be called business tact, made him very unobservant of roads and places, and very incompetent to find his way, which he several times lost; and once he had to accept the hospitality at nightfall of a friendly Presbyterian family, far from the place of his appointment.

as he appeared while alive and in health. A lady in London offered to be at the expense of taking his likeness by daguerreotype, for the sake of possessing it; but could never persuade him to sit.

Having endeavoured to satisfy the reader's curiosity and inspire him with a desire to emulate the excellencies of the deceased, by presenting a few of his characteristics, we now furnish an extract from two different documents, drawn up by the writer immediately after his death when the image of BYRNE was fresh in his memory and imagination: the one a letter to the elder Mr. B.; the other a sketch of his character in one of the two funeral sermons preached in memory of him in London. We first present so much of the letter referred to as relates to our present purpose:—

“London, April 1st., 1851.

“DEAR BROTHER BYRNE,—

“It is now ten or eleven days since your letter of the 20th ult. was received. But yesterday was the first day in which I found a moment to devote my thoughts to the subjects you mention: viz., some account of your late excellent son's character, and of the funeral services for this place.

“I shall ever regard it as one of the many mercies of my life, that I had the honour of having that extraordinary person, ALEXANDER BYRNE, associated with me in the ministry for one of the *two* years which constituted his brief itinerant life. I say *extraordinary*; for I must pronounce him, by far, the most remarkable person I ever knew—I had almost said, of whom I ever read. * * * *
On his appointment as my colleague, I had frequent opportunities of hearing him, though it was usually on a week-night, when, it may be supposed, he had made less

preparation than for the Sabbath; and it was always with astonishment. Although the religious effect was excellent, hearing him had the tendency to depress the mind about any efforts of my own. The sentiment that continually pervaded my thoughts while listening to him was, 'It is high—I cannot attain unto it.' Indeed, he must be pronounced to have excelled in homiletics, using the term to include the composition and delivery of sermons. His sermons were admirably fitted to fulfil the ends of preaching: viz., to convince and convert sinners, and to edify the church of God. He displayed the greatest talent, combined with the most exquisite taste—a most original genius with an excellent judgment. In his preaching, were to be found learning without pedantry; fertility in language without verbosity; information without ostentation; and earnestness without extravagance. From the most intimate conversation oft repeated with him on all subjects, I hesitate not to say, that he possessed a mind capable of grappling with the most difficult questions,—joined to the most humble piety and the most uncompromising moral integrity. There was but one defect that I knew of in his moral constitution; and even this 'failing,' if such it might be called, 'leaned to virtue's side.' This was a slight tendency to censoriousness, or to bear hard on the moral infirmities of professors of religion. But this was the result of his extreme conscientiousness, and the most acute perception of the presence of moral turpitude, joined to a want of *experience*, which nothing but years can supply, and knowledge of the habits, manners, and circumstances of this country. As to his labours, he was methodical, punctual, and exact. He united care for his health with the truest industry. His fidelity to his work in a new country like this, combined with the extreme

delicacy of his habits and the tenderness of his feelings, I have no question, was to him the cause of intense suffering. But he endured it all without a murmur. He was held in the highest respect in this Circuit; but especially in the town, where he was exceedingly and deservedly popular. Yet popularity never elated him. He never took on himself any airs; and all pomposity and affectation were objects of his 'implacable disgust.' No person had more friends and fewer intimates. He knew how to condescend without encouraging improper familiarities. In a word, his gifts, and graces, and excellencies, were only not superhuman.

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Our second extract is from one of the two funeral sermons before referred to:—

“Having illustrated in a general way the doctrines laid down, I proceed to attempt it,—

“*Secondly.*—BY REFERENCE TO THE CASE OF OUR DEAR DEPARTED BROTHER.—‘He being dead yet speaketh.’ How consoling, how improving the thought! Yes; though his fair form is now low in the grave, and his eloquent tongue paralyzed in death—though we shall listen to the measured accents of his musical voice no more; yet ‘he still speaketh’ to us—in what we remember of his living ministrations—in the example of his blameless deportment—in the incidents of his remarkable career—and in the touching circumstances of his early and lamented death.

“We say he speaks to us,—

“1.—*In what we remember of his living ministrations.*—If the ministry of God’s faithful servants was no longer

efficacious, than while they were present or living, its utility would be very small. For often they have not the satisfaction of witnessing much immediate fruit. The apostle Paul informs his Corinthian brethren, that the gospel which he had preached unto them would be instrumental in establishing them, only by 'keeping in memory what he had preached unto them.' So he exhorts the Hebrew converts to remember them that had had the rule over them, who had spoken unto them the word of God, whose faith he recommends them to 'follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.' And in my humble opinion, it would be peculiarly profitable for you to call up in your recollection the characteristic features of our departed brother's preaching among you. It was distinguished for its *practical character, its faithfulness, its fearlessness, and its kindness*. Few ministers, however matured, have attained to such a rare combination of the above mentioned excellencies as he, young as he was. And you ought to be reminded of your great responsibility in being permitted to sit for the space of a year under the ministry of one so wonderfully endowed with the requisite qualifications for a profitable exhibition of divine truth. With all his extraordinary powers of mind and gifts of utterance, he never indulged in fanciful speculations or the least display, of which gifted young preachers are so liable to be fond; but his preaching was purely and pre-eminently *practical*. It will be in the recollection of some before me, how that in the delivery of that very useful sermon on the Saviour's caution, 'Take heed how ye hear,' he broke out with the impassioned exclamation, 'Would God there was no other preaching, but that which is practical!' His *faithfulness* was manifested in adapting his discourses to the exigencies

of the times, and the wants of his hearers. He did not appear ever to have made the inquiry, 'On what subject will *I* appear to the best advantage?' But his language was rather, 'What do the people need for their benefit?' He, unlike the faithless hireling, lifted up his voice in faithful warning when he saw the wolf coming. The incidents in confirmation of this remark will be in the recollection of many here to-day.—He was as *fearless* as he was faithful. He manifested this by calling delinquencies and vices by proper names—in never remaining silent when an erroneous or injurious opinion was put forth, but always stoutly opposing it—and in the promptitude and boldness of his private reproofs and admonitions, sparing neither young nor old, poor nor rich, when they needed it. Indeed, though possessing but little physical courage in facing bodily danger, his moral courage knew no flinch or failure. But he understood how to temper both faithfulness and fearlessness with *kindness*. To this the softening influences of deep christian affection, and the native urbanity of his manners contributed. With him there was no sinful levity, nor any vulgar bluntness. No person ever, perhaps, combined more of the *suaviter in modo*, with the true *fortiter in re*. It was his extreme conscientiousness in opposing what he thought to be wrong, whether in principle or practice, that presented an apparent tenacity of opinion, which to a stranger might have given him the appearance of being self-opinionated. But from this charge any person who knew his real humility and kindness of heart would at once exonerate him. Would it not be a profitable employment to call up in our recollections the gracious words we have heard from his lips, pressed upon us with his own peculiar earnestness of manner; and ask ourselves, 'Have we profited as we

might have done?' It would be an unspeakably awful occurrence, to have one so loving and beloved brought forward to witness against us in the day of final judgment. May God in mercy avert such a catastrophe!

"2.—*He speaks to us in the examples of his blameless deportment.*—It was once said by a faithful minister of Christ, 'My people observe me all the week, to see what I mean on Sunday.' The evil effects of any discrepancy between precept and practice on the part of a preacher of the gospel are incalculable. And no person seemed to understand and feel this truth more than this youthful minister. We may boldly challenge any person to arise and point out the instance in which he deviated in action or word from what he enjoined on others. How truly was he 'a pattern to believers, in doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.' How justly might he have adopted the language of the apostle—yea, methinks I hear him uttering it from the skies, 'Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly, and unblameably, we behaved ourselves among you.' Considering his youth and inexperience—yes, leaving them entirely out of the account—who ever saw a person more discreet and circumspect, uniting so much affability and pleasantness with so much dignity? He has bequeathed us his excellent example; and calls upon us to 'follow him, as he followed Christ.'

"We are also spoken to,—

"3.—*By the incident of his remarkable career.* All who knew him must confess, that he was an extraordinary person, a real prodigy. Only think of an individual exercising acceptably in pulpit ministrations, among the best informed in the mother country, at the early age of fourteen. Then think of the stores of information, and the fires of genius displayed by him, during his sojourn among us a year ago. Reflecting on the ripeness of his judgment,

and the fineness of taste, joined to the splendour of his pulpit talents, we may well exclaim, 'Take him all for all, we ne'er shall look upon his like again.' What then is the lesson we learn from the contemplation of such astonishing mental precocity, but to adore the power of that God whose workmanship he was? We also learn, that the highest developments of mind can co-exist with the most humble piety. But more of this in another place. Is it not also a most irrefragable argument for a future state of existence? Can it be, that powers and capabilities so vast became extinct at the end of eighteen short years? Who can believe it? Is not the extraordinary development of the mental faculties manifested in this case a faint specimen of the inconceivable expansion which the human mind is destined to undergo in the heavenly world, and through the countless ages of eternity? Doubtless it is; and no question the powers of our departed brother will find entertainment and expanding exercises in the endless variety of the celestial state of existence. But as his greatness was the result partially of early and judicious training, as well as the inspirations of genius, the mental phenomenon before us goes in part to show the mighty results of well directed parental guidance upon the infant and childish mind. May all fathers and mothers be induced to listen to the voice which his history speaks to them! How much greater reason have the parents of this departed youth to rejoice in the career of such a son, early as was his removal from this stage of action, than the parents of a conquering ALEXANDER, a TAMERLANE, or a NAPOLEON. But we are perhaps anticipating, in some measure, the following head.

"He speaks to us,—

"4.—*In the circumstances of his early and lamented death.*—I will not presume to say, that possibly his death

may speak to the authorities of the church, in the way of caution, against the impolicy and cruelty of dragging a youth, physically immature, into the hardships and exposures of our itinerant work, however the exigencies of that work may seem to urge its necessity ; nor will I venture to affirm, that this is the voice of admonition to those on whose hospitalities the hapless itinerant is cast, against consigning him, reeking with perspiration from recent exertion, to some open and cheerless sleeping apartment, and to the deadly tendencies of a damp bed : but it plainly speaks of the certainty of death to all, and its possible occurrence to the young as well. If there were any exceptions made, surely his youth, and talent, and loveliness might have pleaded the exemption. But none of them availed : ‘Death loves a shining mark ;’ and the ‘insatiate archer’ levelled his dart but too successfully at the fair and youthful form of our engaging friend, and laid him low beneath the clods of the valley. Oh, what a lesson to the young and the giddy, the ardent and the aspiring, to prepare to meet their God. Yet while his death thus chastens and admonishes us, the circumstances of that calm, peaceful, lamb-like, triumphant departure, illustrates the power of the christian religion, and the sufficiency of the grace of God to support and cheer in nature’s last extremity. Oh, who would not die like ALEXANDER BYRNE ? Then emulate his example ! Seek the same supplies of grace which he possessed ! Live and walk like him ; watch and pray like him ; mortify the flesh and wrestle like him ; and then your dying chamber, like his, will be—

‘Privileged beyond the common walks of virtuous life,
Quite in the verge of heaven.’ ”

With the above extract, the author closes his brief sketch of the life and character of the subject of this memoir.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE REMAINS.

We have furnished the reader with selections from the Sermons and Sketches of Mr. BYRNE. They are mostly of the latter description, mere skeletons, although headed "Sermons," by their author. The Editor has given them in the order in which they were set down in Mr. B.'s manuscripts, with the time and place of their composition, or *re-cast*, as given by himself. We say "re-cast," for some of the outlines here given were drawn up before the period mentioned at the bottom, as appears from evidence among his papers; but we have endeavoured to give the latest modification of every subject. Each sermon was composed or re-cast immediately on the eve of its being preached. From the dates, it will be seen, that several were often composed in a day. The Editor has taken liberty with nothing scarcely in any of them, excepting the points, which were not in all instances complete. And he has even left the exordium at the end of a discourse, when he found so. The reader, therefore, has these productions *verbatim et literatim* as their author left them. It was thought this course would be more satisfactory to the curious and intelligent reader, who would be anxious to see the man and his mind, with its habits of thought and modes of expression, as undisguised as possible.

SERMONS AND SKETCHES.

SERMON I.

PURITY OF HEART.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”—MATT. v. 8.

The ministry of Jesus Christ had long been awaited by men as a test of his Messiaship and the divinity of his religion. In his infancy and childhood, they had traced astonishing developments of wisdom, prudence, and benevolence; but now the burden of prophecy was to be revealed. The faint reflection thrown upon Divine truth by Mosaic and prophetic instructions, were to be gloriously consummated in the meridian brightness of the Sun of Righteousness. Many mysteries were to be solved, and the law fulfilled in the long-expected Gospel. Doubtless the commencement of that ministry was not less a crisis of compassionate solicitude to the heavenly Teacher, than of eager suspense to the assembled audience. His object was not to amuse, fascinate, or astonish, but to “save that which was lost.” The subject is connected with their present salvation and future destinies. Many difficulties obstruct his purpose : the common aversion of mankind to religion, the prejudice of some, the ignorance and pride of others,

were all formidable obstacles. In addition to these, was the mixed character of the assembly. There was the self-righteous Pharisee, and the profane Publican; the careworn father and the giddy youth, the submissive penitent and the obdurate transgressor, the learned rabbin and the illiterate peasant. How may he adapt words to all? Profound for the intelligent, yet simple for the artless; condemning to the sinner, yet consolatory to the contrite; repulsive to the proud, yet persuasive to the humble. Hear him "who spake as never man spake," who "needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man." He touches a chord which vibrates through the congregation, arresting every eye, absorbing every mind, and thrilling in every heart. It is HAPPINESS, the all-comprising object of man's desires and pursuits. Philosophy is silent, and ferocious prejudice is conquered, while they eagerly inhale the welcome subject. Listen to him ye deluded sons of men, long duped by the attractions of gaiety, wealth, and honour, and learn the only path of *happiness* from Him, "the way, the truth and the life." Commencing on this simple basis, he leads them from the lowest rudiments to the highest point in Divine knowledge. This climax we have in the text. Let us then, not less interested in this great doctrine, with the sincere attention of that multitude, consider the *nature* and *blessedness* of *purity of heart*.

I. "Pure" means simple or uncompounded, and is probably here used to express that exalted state of grace in which sin is entirely separated from the soul, usually termed entire sanctification or Christian perfection. This view is confirmed by the gradation observable in the passage. Our Saviour proceeds from the sorrow of the poor in spirit and mourning, to a state of piety preceding that mentioned in

the text. It therefore appears he alludes to perfect holiness. Perfection in holiness is nothing more than an increase or strengthening of those sacred principles already established in the soul at the time of justification. It is a continuation of the same structure on its original foundation, Jesus Christ.

1. Purity of heart is an increase of love. Love in every stage of the Christian course is a supreme desire for God. It is the essence of true religion—"the bond of perfectness," uniting the soul to God and every principle of grace together. The exultation of the disburdened penitent, when first he renders the hosannas of thanksgiving to his reconciled Father, are replete with love, while his earliest steps in the same narrow path evince the same hallowed principle. But the death-blow to carnality is not struck immediately. Sin is cast down, but not completely destroyed. The usurper is dethroned, but still he struggles beneath his demolished empire. But in perfect love there is eradication of all guilt, and the full establishment of Christ's spiritual kingdom. The character of Jehovah is revealed in the most interesting and glorious relations, not only as God appeased and reconciled, but imparting from an inexhaustible fountain the streams of knowledge, comfort, joy, and holiness. The soul recognizing in him the origin and sustenance of its spirituality, ardently aspires after him—its sanctified desires struggle for him. It nothing desires, nothing esteems, "but Jesus crucified." Being daily assimilated to its living Head, it "beholds as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and is changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

With this expansive view of the Divine attributes, the soul imbibes that universal benevolence, which gathers the whole human family in our embrace. "We know that we

have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren"—too feeble a test of entire holiness—perfect love regards the *world*—it crosses the bounds of Christian communion, bursting the native prejudices of the soul, and reiterating the compassionate invitations of its God, exclaims, "O taste and see that the Lord is good!" "Let the people praise thee, O Lord; let all the people praise thee."

"O that the world might taste and see,
The riches of his grace !
The arms of love that compass me,
Would all mankind embrace."

2. This leads to an increased faith. Faith may be regarded as our spiritual vision. The eye with which we behold our names inscribed in the "Book of Life"—"see the King in his beauty"—and "behold the land that is very far off." The natural man hath neither part nor lot in the matter. Tangible and visible objects engross his attention—while the idea of a spiritual change, a spiritual hope, and a spiritual world, is regarded as enthusiasm. And such were we before we were washed and regenerated. At first we could scarcely comprehend the plainest definition of that mental act which confides in Jesus for pardon; and when with trembling hand we clung to our only hope, the ejaculation of the soul was, "Lord, increase our faith!" "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief!" That eye was for the first time opened—we saw not heavenly things before—and astonished with the marvellous light, which beamed upon us in wondrous contrast with our previous darkness, we almost doubted. "The glory of the Lord shone round about us, and we were sore afraid." And is this trembling principle to be the vitality of spiritual life? The substance of things hoped for? The evidence of things not seen? No—it must be mightily

strengthened before it can triumph over the suggestions of Satan—the discouragements of a scoffing world—and the condemnation of a fearful heart. That maturity it attains in perfect holiness. The ignorance and unbelief of the human mind is dispersed, by brighter manifestations of the love and power of God, and the sufficiency of his grace. Temptations and afflictions lose their direful aspect. The night becomes light about us. Death is challenged; and eternity is clearly anticipated with steadfast hope. “Behold, God is our salvation; we will trust and not be afraid.”

3. Purity of heart implies an increase of holy dispositions. So transforming are the internal operations of religion, that they build on the ruins of pride, selfishness, and sensuality, the most amiable and noble dispositions that can adorn humanity. One of these is *meekness*: That which destroys revengeful resentment, and subjugates the latest animosities of our nature. We see it not always in its beauty in the first stages of the Christian character. Envy and prejudice are often vented in displeasure, and sometimes in sinful, though apparently, godly anger. But when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, illuminating and expanding every recess of the soul, the lion becomes a lamb—enemies are viewed with love—insults are answered with pity—and constitutional infirmities, are regulated by this sanctifying grace. Another of these dispositions is *patience*. How often do we behold in the babe in Christ the murmuring expressions of discontent. Repining sorrow is evinced by a doleful countenance; and a cloud of melancholy intercepts the rays of joy and hope. We do not expect an exemption from all sorrow and affliction. Wounded nature must bleed. Our sympathies must recoil at the blow of adversity—yet darkness

may become twilight, and melancholy depression may be reduced to resignation. Thus it is with purity of heart. Here David weeps for his child; yet rejoices, that, though it shall not return to him, he shall go to it. Job groans beneath his aching tumours; yet placidly avows, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Paul groans in this tabernacle, being burdened; yet rejoices, that he shall soon be clothed upon with his house which is from heaven. By patience we glory in tribulation also—we scan the designs of Providence—hope for eternal bliss—and submissively bend to the rod of affliction, and say, "Even so, Father, for it seemeth good in thy sight." Purity of heart is an increase of the disposition of *humility*. Humility is a relative term; and is nothing more than a correct estimate of our sinful state. The penitent feels it when he earnestly cries for redemption; and yet more, when he is relieved by pardon and peace. Not less pungently does it influence the sanctified soul. Futile is the objection of the opponents of our doctrine, that it tends to pride and self-exaltation. Reason and experience demonstrate the contrary. Holiness is an increase of knowledge. The majesty, purity, and beauty of the Divine character are more vividly revealed to the mind; and, contrasting the degenerate soul, in its contracted faculties and innate pollution, with the spotless nature of Jehovah, it exclaims with awe, "Woe is me, for I am undone!" And while it beholds the last stain of iniquity extracted by the efficacious blood of a Lamb without blemish and without spot," it responds in humble adoration, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but to thy name, we give glory." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

4. This purity implies an increase of spiritual desires. Paradox as this may appear, associated with the idea of perfection, it is true. Perfection in holiness precludes not, but rather stimulates to advancement. From the largest substance to the most insignificant atom, God's works are complete; yet, though his finishing touch is evinced in every stage of every work, it prevents not progression. The perfect acorn may grow to an oak. The perfect grain of mustard seed, may rear a stately trunk; and widely extend its sheltering branches. Or the tender sapling may be strengthened to a mighty tree. So it is with holiness: ever ripening, but never ripe; ever growing, never grown; ever maturing, but never arriving at a climax. The nature of holiness, contrasted with its receptacle, the heart, accounts for this. Holiness is an infinite attribute of an infinite God—the heart is limited and imperfect in its capacities—and must fail to embrace all this grace in the present life, or in any period of it. Eternity alone must comprehend the eternal subject; and through its endless ages we must increase in its experience. As the heart is daily satiated at the living fountain, it will expand. Its powers strengthened by exercise, and its desires supplied with heavenly riches, will increase.—

“More of thy life, and more I have,
As the old Adam dies.”

The thirst for variety, peculiar to the human mind, accounts for the necessity of the increase of spiritual desires. God has sanctioned this desire by gratifying it in the variegated beauties of nature. And if the spiritual appetite be but the natural one rectified, its desires must be satisfied. We cannot stand continually at the door-posts of justification, or even sanctification, and admire only a few principles of the love which redeemed and saved us—we must

advance. These rudiments of repentance and faith are too simple for us now: we must go on to perfection—to the possession of the fulness of God. Eternity itself will not stem the torrent of our desires—we, with angels, must attain the comprehension of “the length, and breadth, and height of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.” Such then, is the state mentioned in the text, one of exemption from all iniquity; and a full establishment of grace. It is connected with an encouraging promise, “Blessed are the pure in heart, *for they shall see God.*” Therefore we proceed,—

II.—To consider its blessedness. “They shall see God.” This is the most comprehensive expression of Christian happiness found in the word of God. It comprises every intellectual and spiritual delight. But were this presented to the ungodly, as a motive to forsake sin and seek righteousness, they would soon reject it. So opposite is sin to holiness, that our greatest joy, is their deepest misery. That countenance of Jehovah, to us reconciled and smiling with approbation, is to them clouded with wrath and condemnation. This favours the view we advanced in the beginning, that this language was especially directed to believers.

1. The sight of God is their chief joy, because of their affinity to him. In universal nature, a unity subsists between members of the same species. Vegetables of the same nature, must be cultivated in the same soil. Beasts of the same class eagerly associate. And among mankind, every spirit seeks a kindred disposition. Where shall the believer go to gratify this affection? To the world? A night of darkness and death meets his gaze—sin in its most hideous aspects revealing the awful degeneracy of the heart. To the church? To angels? Desparingly

he turns from them exclaiming, "Whom have I in heaven but thee; and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee?" He finds the origin of holiness in God.

2. His bliss is enhanced by beholding God, through the means he has appointed,—

In nature, in his word, in his ordinances, in his providences.

3. But thrice "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" in glory, in judgment, in endless joy—perfectly, unobstructed by sin—the imperfections of humanity. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then we shall know, even as we also are known."

"Him, eye to eye, we there shall see,
Our face like His shall shine;
O what a glorious company,
When saints and angels join!"

1. Sinner, is not this happiness? This is that gloomy religion you have so often rejected.

2. In conclusion, let me apply this doctrine to justified believers. Are we aspiring after this? The interests of the church are connected with it.—"Let us go on to perfection:" 1 Thess. v. 23.

London, C. W., 7th July, 1849.

SERMON II.

THE WARNING OF LOT TO HIS FRIENDS.

“ And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, Up ! Get ye out of this place ; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law.”

GENESIS xix. 14.

Amid the “ clouds and darkness which are round about” the providences of Jehovah, man is occasionally permitted, by a ray of heavenly instruction, to view the wisdom, justice, and benevolence of God. That the sword of Divine indignation should sacrifice the righteous and the wicked alike, is astonishing to the side-glance of those imperfect minds, which if not checked by the mandates of revelation, would question the righteous judgments of God. But the problem is solved, in some degree, by two considerations. National sins must be punished with national calamities ; and the righteous in their national relations must submit to deserved wrath. Again, in not a few instances, the righteous are guilty—of much negligence, compromise, and declension in their spiritual relations. No wonder then that the Almighty, in “ breaking the bow and cutting the spear in sunder” of the wicked, should reserve an arrow of chastisement for his children. That while he vents “ the thunder of his power” upon his enemies, he should pour the remnant of his anger upon his delinquent church. This is illustrated in the history of Lot. Avarice and parsimony had stained his christian

character. When Abraham presented to his choice two tracts of country, saying, "If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Lot selfishly selected the more fertile soil, regardless of the evil society of the place; which would surely mar his spiritual privileges, and injure the religious interests of his family. Time soon revealed the danger and misery of his position. Frequent associations produced familiarity; and familiarity connexion, till he found himself allied to "men," who "were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Their sins arose to heaven, and were now come to a climax: justice, triumphing over mercy, and the intercessions of the faithful Abraham, now prepared his weapons for severe judgment, and refused to be appeased, "That in his wrath he might condemn them." His ministering angels had received their dread commission, and were now arrived at Sodom; and doubly incensed by the daring resistance of the inhabitants, who pursued them to the house of Lot, they determined speedily to execute the Divine decree. But He, who "in the midst of wrath remembers mercy" to his humblest and most unfaithful followers, was mindful of Lot, and his ungodly friends, for his sake. "And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? Son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatever thou hast in this city, bring them out of this place." "For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord." In compliance with this command, "Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters," &c. This Scripture, which was "written aforetime for our learning," comprises doctrinal and practical truths. Nor is their importance lessened by the typical character of the passage.

We observe,—

I. Lot addressed this warning to his relatives—“He went out and spake to his sons-in-law, which married his daughters.” To them he was endeared by family ties, and for their rescue he was peculiarly interested. With a Christian heart he recoiled from the persevering blasphemies and transgressions of the Sodomites and Gomorrahites; yet, though his sons-in-law were citizens of the place, he makes one last desperate effort for their deliverance. Here a principle of vital importance to the progression of Christianity is established—religion begins at home.

1. The peculiar affection for our own, exhibited by Lot, forms a noble and beautiful trait in humanity, and stamps the relics of its departed glory with admirable dignity. While we bewail the inherent depravity of our nature, and behold its outbreaks in universal vice, we may trace some footprints of beauty and excellence, if not divinity, in the soul of man. And is there to be found one more plausible than that which unites man to man in the bonds of family connexion? The Governor of the universe, seeing that the affections of his creatures could not be equally placed on every object and individual, has wisely classified us into nations, communities, societies, and families; and under the covenant of grace, he has made these divisions to subserve his purposes in the evangelization of the world. We admire the solicitude of the father, as he perseveringly toils for the temporal subsistence of his family; and if there be a palliation to that war which desolates and destroys our country, it is the virtuous patriotism which instigates the warrior to sacrifice life and comfort for the land of his fathers. But how meagre are these thrilling examples, compared with the far more important influence of this principle in spiritual concerns. Here is true affection—

genuine patriotism—see it in the nation: common and not individual interest is the ruling principle of legislation; and eloquence, genius, and every excellent qualification, conspire to promote the welfare of the people mutually connected. See it in societies and communities. Benevolence, philanthropy, and self-denying zeal, cordially unite to meet the wish, indulge the infirmities, and maintain the honour of every member. See it in families. How beautiful the parent, pleading for the conversion of the child, and carefully implanting the seeds of Divine truth in the youthful mind, anxiously and prayerfully awaiting the harvest of salvation and eternal life. Never was a human principle enlisted in so sublime an exercise. “What God hath joined, let no man put asunder.”

2. The affection of Lot for his own is sanctioned by reason and experience, as well as humanity. No end can be accomplished without the employment of means. And this is not less true of Christian than worldly systems, seeing the Head of the Church almost universally co-operates with human power. Philosophy and science, with all their fascinating embellishments, have not at once secured the approval or patronage of the world. Their advocates have been called to encounter many obstacles, in the educational prejudices and distaste for knowledge among men. Nor do their most conclusive arguments avail, till by experiment after experiment, they refute their objectors. Is it then to be expected, that the Gospel operating on man as a moral agent, will overwhelm the world in a day? Do we suppose, that doctrines unadorned by rhetoric or science, —“bringing not peace on the earth, but a sword, and making a man’s foes those of his own household,” opposed to every desire and propensity of the carnal mind, and waging war with hosts of visible and invisible enemies—

do we suppose that they will miraculously evangelize and convert the world in a day? No, beloved, time is given that it may be occupied, and means are instituted that they may be employed. The world was not made in a day—philosophy will not instruct in a day. Nor will the sound of the Gospel reach it in a day. God works by system; and his religion must progress in the steps he has appointed, from one division of the human family to another, until “righteousness shall cover the earth, as the waters do the face of the great deep.”

3. This principle of peculiar affection for our own, is sanctioned by the character and operations of Christianity. Expansive and lofty ideas are indeed suggested to us of religion in many of the glowing symbols of prophecy. All the trophies of redemption are presented to our gaze at one view, that our confidence may be strengthened and our zeal stimulated. But not these sublimities of poetry exclude from our calm consideration the plain, practical fact, that the truth of the Gospel has been gradually revealed to man, and that his purposes are usually fulfilled by degrees. The figures we so much admire, reveal this important feature of Christianity. “There shall be an handful of corn in the earth, upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like the grass of the earth.” Ps. lxxii. 16. The Saviour expressively compares the operations of his Gospel to earthly fruit. “It first bringeth forth the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.” Again, “It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: but when it is sown, it groweth up and shooteth out great branches, so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shade of it.” Mark iv. 28–31. What encour-

agement is this to the feeblest effort and the most meagre beginning to spread the truth! At a first glance, the idea seems almost absurd, that a chariot so mighty should be propelled in a course so expansive, by the incommensurate influence of family religion. Yet review the past, and see what God has wrought. How upon the smallest foundations he has reared the most stately edifices, and made these divisions of the human race to operate one upon another till all shall be saved.

4. This peculiar affection for our own is sanctioned by the authoritative examples of the Patriarchs and the Apostles, and of our Lord himself. These sacred characters we reverently contemplate; and from them we infer the many of the most salutary directions. Thus ancient is, in some degree, the standard of modern piety. To the faithful maintenance of family religion we are momentarily indebted for the foundations of those religious blessings which now, "in the fulness of time," have reached us. Abraham commanded his household in righteousness. Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." David, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart." Philip said to his brother Nathaniel, "Come and see." Christ "came to his own," lived with, taught, suffered, died among them. The Apostles were commissioned first to preach the Gospel "at Jerusalem." "Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." In Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, was kindled the glorious fire, which ignited the Gentile world. Here were no wild speculations—no enthusiastic dreams—consequently each impressed with his individual responsibility, lent his aid to the furtherance of the truth. Thus was the foundation of Christianity laid; and thus the glorious structure must be carried up till its final consummation in heaven. "Thus the little one shall become a thousand."

II. We remark the danger from which he exhorted them to flee. This was the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is symbolical of a doctrine—suggests the most awful incentives to flee from the wrath to come. The Lord will destroy our city. It was just, sudden, universal. “Knowing these terrors of the Lord, we persuade men.” 2 Peter, iii. 10, 11. The realities of this great and dreadful day of the LORD, are still necessary to arouse mankind from the slumber of carnal security, and to stimulate the believer to perseverance.

III. We observe the warning itself. “Up, get ye out of this place.” It was midnight. Drowsiness and inconvenience strongly induce them to remain. Sin is a state of sleep: the Gospel an awakening trumpet. In two important particulars, this warning prefigures the way of salvation.

1. In haste, time, influences of the spirit, importance of the subject demand this. “Now is the accepted time.”

2. Personal exertion. “Up, get *ye* out of this place.” It was not a mere submission to the Divine will, Lot here urged upon them. It was an exhortation to depart. Faith is an act of the mind.

IV. Lastly, it concerns us to contemplate the awful reception of this warning. “He seemed as one that mocked to his sons-in-law.” Thus it is still with man. It arises from pride, unbelief, procrastination. Still truth meets with such a reception. The Church has improved in wealth and influence; yet, “to the Jews it is a stone of offence—to the Greeks foolishness.” Be warned by the consequences. “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh,” &c.

London, July 28, 1849.

SERMON III.

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”—GALATIANS v. 1.

The Ministers of Christ are his ambassadors. As such, they must subordinately represent him in his relations to his people. One of the most endearing of these is paternal solicitude for their steadfastness and prosperity. Hence he prays, “Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.” “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are.” Such affection is necessary to counteract the persevering assiduity of the tempter, whose hosts are exerted strenuously to demolish his kingdom. By various channels does he invade the probationary territory of the sincere Christian. Sometimes powerfully influencing the mind. Again, cunningly alluring the affections of the soul. Sometimes presenting the terrific aspect of the “roaring lion,” and frequently the dissembling gloss of “an angel of light.” By the latter stratagem he strewed his tares with the precious wheat of the Galatian Churches. His Judaizing apostles, fleeing from the restrictions of inward religion, sought a substitute in the abrogated ceremonial law, and thus endeavoured to re-unite the shattered remnants of that veil, rent by the expiring groans

of the MESSIAH, which had so long intercepted the blessed privileges of Christianity from the Gentile world. They had succeeded in destroying the faith of some, and in quenching the zeal of others. When, lo! the scheme of apostacy is discovered to the Church, and the evangelical doctrines of St. Paul are again declared and practically enforced. In the preceding part of the epistle, he had refuted the misrepresentations and arguments of his opponents. He first declares his unwavering adherence to the simplicity of Christianity, even despite the repulsion of his prejudiced brother Peter. He then shows the Mosaic economy to be a preparatory system. Its "law was but a school-master to bring us to Christ." Its types were but the entrance to the hallowed services of the "latter day." In a word, it had but "the shadow of good things to come," and was in every respect superseded by the Christian dispensation. In this chapter, he earnestly applies the doctrine he had just defended. An admirable summary of this application we have in the text: "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty," &c.

I. The Christian's Liberty.

From the immediate connexion of the words, we may easily perceive that the Apostle specially alludes to a liberation from the restrictions of the ceremonial law. It was, truly a state of bondage. The awful majesty of JEHOVAH mantled with terror all their religious services and divine instructions. The very structure of the temple was indicative of a great disparity between the worshippers and the Deity adored. There was the outer-court, then the tabernacle, then the "holy of holies" "within the veil." These, with their censers and altars, their burnt offerings, sin offerings, and thank offerings, were so many sad evidences of the intricate labyrinths they must pass in order to

commune with God. "The law was the ministration of death." Its exactions were prompt obedience, or the severest penalty. It demanded rigid attention to the typical character of the minutest sacrifice. No flaw was overlooked. "The lamb must be without blemish and without spot." Nor was the poorest member of the congregation exempt from furnishing an offering. And even when the oblations were offered, "there was remembrance again of sins every year." Was not this a state of servitude? Answer, thou trembling and quaking Moses—ye fearfully reverent priests—ye dazzled and affrighted Jews! From this bondage they were delivered by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!" to consummate these types by the offering of myself once for all, and to open up a new, living, and simple way of access to thee. We turn with delight from the study of an obstructed and tediously performed disquisition, to the relieving perusal of plain and simple subjects. So well might these slaves of ceremony turn from the elaborate mazes of their symbolical religion, to the simpler and happier privileges of Christianity. "In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love."

This ceremonial bondage, however, was but a lively figure of the more awful bondage of sin, under which we groan by nature. But, blessed be God, as the sacrifice of Christ has liberated the Jews from their servile ritual, so hath he "made us free."

1. This is a dominion and influence of sin. Sin is an inherent principle: it dwells in the affections; sways the judgment, and directs the practice. Thus if left in our natural condition, unalarmed by the trumpet of Gospel truth, we remain ignorant of this our dangerous relation to

God. Whatever ideas men unaided by revelation, though assisted by tradition, have formed of a Supreme Being, and the worship necessary to appease his wrath and secure his favour, they have never discovered this radical doctrine. The solemn verity, that man is enslaved to sin, is either completely exploded, or, what is equally unscriptural, is explained as merely referring to practical iniquity. Hence motives have been suggested, and principles established to moralize mankind. But the result of these superficial antidotes has only corroborated the doctrines of the Bible: that man's sin is coeval with his existence, and that he demands an internal application of the "blood of sprinkling." By such an effective regeneration does CHRIST liberate the believer from his bondage. They are unconscious of their slavery, but his Spirit convinces; they cannot realize themselves, but he assists them; and believing, they have life through his name. The "strong man," Satan, is disarmed, bound, and cast out from the heart: his goods are despoiled, and his kingdom demolished. "Sin shall not have dominion over them; for they are not under the law, but under grace."

2. It is a liberty from the accusations of conscience. Deep as we are plunged in iniquity, and firmly as we are bound by the chains of the adversary, we are not absolutely governed by him. This earth is the arena of conflict between heaven and hell for the soul of man. Our carnal slumbers are frequently disturbed by the voice of an inward monitor.

Believers are free from this. Their spirit or conscience acquiesces in the Divine testimony; all slavish fear is removed; their feet is set upon a rock.

"Exults our rising soul,
Disburdened of her load;
And swells unutterably full,
Of glory and of God."

3. The Christian's is a state of liberty, inasmuch as his desires and affections are made congenial to the law of God. Terms indicative of severe restraint and servitude are sometimes in the New Testament applied to the service of Christ: "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." But these are either used in relation to sin, or in parallel with the Jewish ritual. The Christian's law, is a "law of liberty": his "yoke is easy, and his burden is light." His meat and drink is to do his Master's will. Religion has its rules, and every believer is amenable to them; but to those in Christ, they are approving and not condemning.

4. Holiness is a state of of liberty, because of the amplitude of its pleasures and privileges. Religion is a restraint only upon sin. While it inspires its subjects with the solemnities of eternity, it withholds from us no happiness which a spiritual taste can desire.

Some imagine that holiness consists in deep melancholy and sighing solicitude. And thus the "ways of pleasantness" have been misrepresented to the world; and the "paths of peace" have been deprived of their most enticing beauties. Such moody devotees have secluded themselves from the world, and pined and wept a life of pretended religion in caves and monasteries. Many in modern times cast similar erroneous reflections on their piety, by incessant mourning and complaining, while they should "Rejoice in the Lord always," and "in every thing give thanks."

It was never the design of the religion of CHRIST to destroy the principles of nature, but to rectify them; and to turn in a heavenly direction the desires and propensities of the human heart. We must banish from this religion the ideas of gloom, uneasiness, and miserable solicitude. Here the faculties of the soul are called into the noblest and freest exercise. John x. 9.

II.—We come to enforce the apostolic exhortation to steadfastness, which in his words are powerful and expressive. “Stand fast, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

1. “Stand,” by firmly manifesting the doctrines of Christianity. In them are embodied the standard of your liberty, the fire of your love, the centre of your hope, and the basis of your faith. All Christians should have clear, steadfast views of the truth of our holy religion. Hence the apostle, previous to this exhortation, vehemently contends for the faith.

2. “Stand fast,” by adhering to thy faith in CHRIST.

3. “Stand fast,” by faithfully observing practical piety.

The text teaches, that the highest estate of holiness on earth is fallible.

[Conclude by warning sinners.]

London, 2nd August, 1849.

SERMON IV.

THE REVIVAL OF THE CHURCH PREPARATORY TO THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.

“Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.”—

Acts iii. 19.

Man is a being influenced by various passions and various circumstances. The tale that affords him pleasure and elicits his admiration to-day, will to-morrow be tedious and devoid of interest. Such are the effects of Divine truth upon the human mind, unregenerated, the sound of salvation soon loses its harmony; and the tragedy of the cross its pathos. The text was not received with such listless feelings. They had beheld a miracle. Astonishment opened their minds to instruction, and instruction to conviction. We purpose *first*, making a few general observations on this address of the apostle; and, *secondly*, establishing its importance, as connected with the extension of the work of God.

I.—The address. “Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.”

1. Its simplicity. This highly contrasted with the dispensation just completed. Here is no allusion to golden censers, gorgeous temples, or costly oblations. “The word is nigh thee”—it is easily connected with its great end.

2. Its humiliating tendency. The persons addressed were not the off-scouring of the world, profane Gentiles. "They had Abraham for their father." Yet this did not avail. "He only is a Jew, who is one inwardly; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

3. The doctrines here proposed are absolutely necessary. Nothing short of this radical change, here expressed by the blotting out of sins, can fit us for the kingdom of grace or glory.

4. The apostle here shows that our salvation does to a great extent depend on our will. Repentance and faith are the gifts of God; yet he places the work in their hands.

II.—Establish its connexion with the extension of the work of God. "When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." "Times of refreshing," a Hebrew phrase, expressing any remarkable deliverance. Dr. WHITBY supposes it refers to the day of Judgment. Others, that it alludes exclusively to the bringing in of the Gentiles. While others view it as the result of repentance and conversion, reading it thus: "and times of refreshing." The general extension of the work of God, is dependent on the spiritual life of the church. Because,—

1. His church is the appointed agency for the diffusion of truth.

2. There is a mutual dependance of feeling in the minds of communities.

3. There is a dependance in the relations of social life.

London, 5th August, 1849.

SERMON V.

THE HEAVENLY REST.

“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”—HEB. iv. 9.

The certainty of rewards and punishments, is an essential pillar in the Divine government. If we remove it, every virtuous principle is overturned—every stimulus to holiness is extinguished. The standard of moral rectitude becomes variable, and consequently useless. The fortress of truth is thrown down; and the ways of life and the way of death are indistinguishable. It is because of this, that the scriptures so emphatically seal their doctrines and admonitions, with the promise of happiness, and the denunciations of wrath.

Awed by the danger of damnation, and cheered by the prospect of eternal bliss, we flee from the path of perdition, and persevere in the course of righteousness. “We walk by faith and not by sight.” Thus clouds of perplexity and tribulation are dispersed; and, impelled with holy ambition, we “seek our better inheritance.” The Apostle was impressed with these important considerations, when he wrote this epistle. In other letters he had strenuously contended for simple Christianity, to the apparent exclusion of other dispensations. And now, lest his Hebrew converts, in rejecting their ancient rites, should depreciate many great

truths symbolized in them, he institutes a beautiful and striking connexion between Judaism and Christianity. The Gospel dispensation was "the fulness of the time." Types were substantiated; prophecies were fulfilled: and thus the law "passed away," surrendering to the Gospel, which "continueth." Yet some emblems remained without their substance; and some promises were but partially verified. And just as the moral code, dispensed on Sinai, still maintains its rigid demands, so these symbols united to Christianity, remain to beautify its doctrines and promises, and to participate in the brightness of our blessed consummation. One of the most important of these figures was the rest promised to the saints. Although it was pre-figured by God's rest from the work of creation on the seventh day, and allotted to the Israelites in Canaan; and enjoyed in the weekly Sabbath's of the church, he argues it "still remaineth." "If Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day." Our text contains the glorious conclusion of the discussion: "There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God." Your prayerful attention is invited to the consideration of this rest and its inheritors.

I.—Without amplifying on the term rest, in its application to the abiding spiritual peace of the believer, or to his numerous delightful privileges on earth, we shall confine our remarks to its direct and ultimate reference to that glorious heaven, which constitutes the home or rest of the Israel of God.

1. Heaven as a rest will be a cessation from toil. Life is at best a wearisome and laborious journey. The history of man is a sad verification of the curse originally imposed by offended Justice. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou return unto the ground." The most

miserable earn a scanty subsistence by the severest drudgery And if here and there we meet an indolent epicure, he of fashion is dozing on a couch softened by the slavery of his forefathers; or recklessly enjoying the harvest of a toilsome seed-time.

The honours of intellect and literature are procured with a still greater expense. The mental faculties are disordered by the prostration of physical strength: and the pleasures of genius and imagination become damped by sorrow, disappointment, and disease. Mental and bodily health are not generally combined; as to attain the one, we must almost forfeit the other. The ruddy complexioned peasant,—by healthful exercise, by dissipation and amusement, deprives himself of the nobler gems of profound study; and unhinges his mind from the delights of solitude and meditation. Facts, the most practical and simple, are deduced by great exertion and tedious calculation. Mark the student! his pallid cheek, his thought-worn eyes, and his writhing brow, all indicate the inward struggle to wrest from the wreck of a confused understanding, some plain or beautiful idea.

The path to heaven, though plain and well defined, is strewn with many sorrows and difficulties. Only by diligent watchfulness and prayer can we preserve the humblest spark of piety. And we are ever “labouring” and “enduring hardness, till emancipated from our earthly tabernacle.” These evils shall be redressed in the realms of bliss. Our powers shall be capacitated for our employments; and sickness, opposition, and sorrow, shall not impede our progress, or disappointment our hopes. Severe toil shall be reduced to innocent and profitable amusement. The body shall no longer “groan, being burdened;” but invigorated with resurrection power, and

“fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ,” shall apply its energies to heavenly duties. Enervating diseases shall not impede our intellectual pursuits. The exploring genius shall not there be arrested by distracting cares; or stopped in its onward march, by withering disappointment, or sudden adversity. The brilliant imagination, no longer clogged in its eager ascent, by the chains of a diseased and dying body, shall aspire to the inconceivable heights of Divine knowledge; and ever satiate its eternal thirst at the streams of the living fountain. The wearied Christian traveller shall there recline on “green pastures,” and forget his troubles in everlasting joy. The warrior shall there receive his long-sought crown; and shall heal his spiritual wounds with the balm of celestial peace. The world shall no longer annoy. The scoffer shall echo his shrieks in hell, but they shall be unheard in heaven. And the “Old Serpent,” with disappointed jealousy, shall enviously behold his long hunted prey safely harboured in eternal rest. But “no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon. The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

2. Heaven will be a rest from anxiety. Contemplate the human family in all circumstances, and say, Who is free from anxiety? It is felt in every breast, and depicted in every countenance. The richman in his mansion, overwhelmed and perplexed with wealth, exclaims, “What shall I do? for I have not where to bestow my fruits and my goods.” The eager eye of the merchant and statesman evince the inward struggle and suspense of tortured ingenuity. The honours of dignified offices are proportionately mingled with cares.

The poor man in his hovel, asks, "What shall we eat, and drink; and wherewithal shall we be clothed."

Firm as is the rock of salvation, sure as are the promises of the Gospel, and bright as is the hope of immortality, we have our spiritual cares. Arise from ignorance, uncertainty, suggestions of the tempter. But there we shall have rest from these.

"There we shall bathe our weary souls,
In seas of heavenly rest;
And not a wave of trouble roll,
Across our peaceful breast."

3. In this heavenly rest, satisfaction will be suggested by the retrospect of completed labour. This feeling is enjoyed at the completion of our earthly toils; and greatly tends to hush the discontent and smother the asperities incident to life. The labourer, the warrior, the minister of Christ feels it. Much more so there, where life with its sorrows and joys shall be reviewed; personal and relative. This is perfectly consistent with that humility, which ascribes the glory of our present salvation to Divine grace.

4. This rest will prepare the saint for future employments, by adapting and immortalizing our mental and bodily faculties. Heaven is not a place of idleness. The intermediate state, may be termed our night of sleep. The body will be in the tomb; the soul will flutter on the confines of eternal bliss. Both shall be united on the morning of the resurrection. Delightful pleasures will be developed to the expanding mind, mysteries will be solved, difficulties will be explained. Eternity shall be occupied with the study of Divine things.

II.—We proceed to consider the inheritors of this rest. "The people of God." This title, formerly applied to the Jews, was either a national or religious distinction. But

now, when every man must bear his own burden; when the piety of ancestors; and the ceremonies of devotion are alike unavailable to admit us to the "holy nation," the term refers exclusively to believers in Christ. They are his by redemption and sanctifying grace. Heaven is guarded by conditions.

1. The righteous alone are entitled to it. The beauty of the scheme of redemption consists in its conformity to all the Divine attributes; and this conformity is necessary to support God's moral government. The blood of Christ procured no more than the possibility of our salvation. Only thus can "God be just, while the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

2. The righteous alone are capable of its pleasures. Happiness may be termed the gratification of our desires. The desires of the ungodly are sinful. Happiness consists in a sense of right to propriety. This the sinner cannot have. Then murmur not, the plan is laid, mercy as well as justice.

Such is the reward of the righteous. Encourage yourselves with the prospect of Canaan—it is promised. Be steadfast, immoveable, and courageous. Soon thou wilt find rest! See that your title is clear! We "see they could not enter in because of unbelief." "Let us, therefore, fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it."

London, 23rd August, 1849.

SERMON VI.

DIFFERENT RECEPTIONS OF THE GOSPEL.

“ And some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not. ”
ACTS xxviii. 24.

The unbeaten path is invariably trodden with cautious fear. In any undertaking, the simple fact, that another has performed the same, inspires the mind with confidence and courage. The mariner, the traveller, the projector of a new enterprise. Such, doubtless, were the feelings of the Apostle Paul, the pilot of Gentile evangelization. Opposed by his brethren; afflicted with the rigorous examination of magistrates and frequent imprisonment; fatigued and discouraged with a perilous voyage, he commences his Gospel message. The result of it upon the Jews, finally persuaded him, that the time of the Gentiles was fully come.

I.—The text states two different receptions of the Gospel.

1. “Some believed.” Hitherto, perhaps, they had strenuously adhered to many of the rites of the Levitical economy, though these were sadly interpolated with error and traditions of men. But seeing, by the conclusive argument of the Apostle, a plain connexion established between theirs and the new and better dispensation, throwing off the trammels of prejudice, they acquiesced in the truth;

and admired this nobler and more expansive display of Divine compassion and infinite love.

Perhaps their belief led them, further, to avow their principles not merely by words and declamations, but by sincere penitential sorrow. Paul preached unto them "Jesus and the resurrection;" and it reached their hearts "in the demonstration of the spirit." And they anxiously inquired, "What shall we do to be saved?"

Possibly they evinced their faith still further, by accepting the terms of salvation, and "believing with hearts unto righteousness."

2. "Some believed not." They rejected the truth, as that which crucifies carnal propensities; quenches Pharisaic pride; and disappoints delusive hope. Ignorance, sin, and prejudice overcame the dictates of calm reason, and enlightened understanding. They either discarded the Gospel completely, or doubtfully halted between two opinions. Some circumstances seemed favourable to the genuineness of his sacred mission; some were derogatory to it. A minister of Christ, yet imprisoned: an ambassador of peace, yet exciting riot and commotion: an adherent to the moral law and the prophets, yet upbraided and persecuted by some of his fellow Jews.

II.—Such has been the reception of the Gospel in all ages of the world. It, therefore, becomes us to account for this solemn circumstance. In all our religious assemblies and communities, great and small, we have living, fearful demonstration of this. How is it?

1. Not because of the difference of ministerial agency. This may account for some instances of carnal slumber, but, comparatively few. The eloquent Apollos, and the learned Paul; the practical Peter, and the doctrinal James, all adapt their hallowed forces, to the variety of

human intellect and taste; and yet where these characteristics are combined in one minister, the same result follows.

2. Not because of different intelligence or acquired knowledge in the hearers. The Gospel is simple; its profoundest depths may be digested by the peasant as by the scholar.

3. Nor because of the weakness or deficiency of solid, conclusive evidences of truth. The scruples of tortured ingenuity, kindled by aversion to the light, have all been ridiculed and confronted; yet is there not always saving faith.

4. Not because some, more than others, are predisposed for salvation by religious training.

5. It is not necessary to accomplish any design of Providence.

6. Nor fulfil prophecy.

7. It is not necessitated by the fore-knowledge, or the predestination of God.

How then is the problem solved? The burden turns on man's own obstinacy. "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Salvation depends on our own volitions. And, what is more reasonable? What better corresponds with thy relations to Him; or with thy eternal happiness?

1. This twofold view of Gospel hearers, should excite in the church joyful gratitude, commingled with previous anxiety.

2. Exhort the sinner.

London, 25th August, 1849.

SERMON VII.

OBEDIENCE REQUISITE TO THE PERFECT
KNOWLEDGE OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

“If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”—JOHN vii. 17.

The evidences of Christianity are suited to the sinfulness as well as ignorance of man. Arguments, plain and conclusive, rise in rich abundance from history and science, and boldly confront every stratagem of scepticism. These may be regarded as the main pillars, or external barriers of truth, which defend Scripture from the invasion of ingenious subtlety. But there is a hidden energy, lurking in the inmost recesses of every soul, which stands firm and daring before the array of all external evidence. That enemy is sin—inherent unbelief; and nothing but experimental holiness, practical piety, can destroy his dominion. Most of the objections to a Divine revelation, arise rather from this natural aversion, than from any doubt of its authenticity; nor can they be better answered than in the evangelical language of the text, “If any man, &c.”

The Jews had beheld our Lord’s most extraordinary miracles; and had seen prophecy literally fulfilled, in the daily events of his life, and yet they acknowledged not his

divinity. They had heard the whimsical objections urged by Scribes and Pharisees ridiculed and exposed; but their infidel inquiry still was, "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Christ selected a special occasion to propound a new evidence of his mission—the Jewish feast of Tabernacles. He delayed his coming, to excite their curious expectations. "About the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the Temple and taught. And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them and said, My doctrine is not mine but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

The doctrine proposed is, that obedience to the truth is essential to a perfect knowledge of Divine things.

We shall *first* consider this "doing of his will," as forcibly strengthening other arguments; and *secondly*, as furnishing a class of evidence peculiar to itself.

I.—"Doing the will of God," is an aid to the external arguments of Christianity.

In the study of all human sciences we must be disposed by a natural taste. But as we can have no taste for Divine subjects, till we acquire it by inward holiness, it follows, that the religious knowledge of the mere scholar, is superficial compared with that of the true believer. The former examines the sacred subject to detect errors; the latter to discover the excellencies. To the one it is a tedious duty; to the other it is a delightful privilege.

1. The existence, wisdom, and goodness of God are demonstrated in nature. To man, unbiased by carnal enmity, this would conclusively appeal to his understanding and heart. But mark the difference between the conclusion of the sinner and the Christian!

Let a disbeliever in Revelation study the works of nature,

and induce the existence of a first cause; not only will his knowledge be insufficient, but will involve many difficulties and contradictions. The dominant sin of his heart will sooner suggest objections than evidences.

Or let one satisfied of Scripture truth examine nature. In his religious inquiries, he will judge sacred subjects at the bar of human reason. Neither the judge nor witnesses are competent to the task—and his conclusions will be very indifferent.

But hand the book of nature to the believer, and with different feelings will he peruse it, and extract its testimony.

2. The providence of God display his moral government to man. Appropriate and just as these are, they require to be viewed with a more penetrating instrument than reason or philosophy. Difficulties are solved, mysteries are received by the believer. "This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes."

3. The authenticity of Scripture, is established by the fulfilment of prophecy. Plain and authoritative as this evidence is, alas! how has it been abused! Figures have been misconstrued; and that which was designed as a key to unlock sacred truth, has doubly closed it in ignorance and uncertainty on the sons of unbelief. They were not studied by prayer—light was not sought through the proper medium. But with ease and delight can the believer recognise, not merely in the general progress of the Gospel, and the history of the Church, but in his own happy experience, their fulfilment.

4. The Divine inspiration of the Bible is demonstrated by miracles. But how differently are these viewed by the unregenerated sinner, and the meek, obedient disciple. Christ restores a maniac. The former says, "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils:" the latter, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?"

And so in all evidences;—carnal enmity will hide the beauty and force of religion.

II.—But there are many arguments peculiar to practical holiness. Enter within the vail, and there you will find many precious gems, which, though connected with other arguments, are characterized by far more beauty and force.

1. To him, the Justice of God appears—rather, it is felt in his heart. He has carefully examined the whole basis of his atonement; and being sprinkled with his precious blood, he glorifies the scheme which acquits God as just, and yet provides for the justification of him that believeth in Jesus.

2. He realizes the love of God. Words cannot describe it. The spirit of truth testifies his adoption into the Divine family.

3. The fulfilment of the Divine promises, is, to a great extent, dependent on practical righteousness.

4. The facts of Christian biography, and our own experience prove this.

1. If these things are so, how important it is, that we do his will. Belief is based upon knowledge; and the exquisite departments of religious knowledge can only be developed by practice.

2. How flimsy and invalid are all objections to Christianity. The unbeliever judges concerning that which he knows not.

London, 31st August, 1849.

SERMON VIII.

SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.

(PREACHED AT AN OPENING SERVICE.)

“ Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father.

“ Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship; for Salvation is of the Jews.

“ But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him.”—JOHN IV. 21, 22, 23.

The mind is accustomed to regard with associations of reverence and love, those ancient places and buildings which are the monuments of remarkable events. While we view their antiquated ruins, the very ground we tread seems sacred. The Israelites had many such remembrances—of battles fought, of victories achieved, and deliverances accomplished. No wonder then, that their minds, solemnized by reflection, should recur with holy interest to the historical events commemorated by pillars, heaps of stones, and distinguished places; and that they should love the smallest relic of their ancestry, with interest and patriotic affection. But their temple and places of devotion, they regarded with superstitious awe; and dangerously prided themselves in their adherence to monuments of their pious ancestry. Such, doubtless, were the

views of the woman of Samaria; when our Lord boldly announced a new era in the history of the Church; when Jewish and Samaritan temples, bereft of their exclusive sacredness, should be placed on a level with Gentile churches. The text portrays to us: 1st, The worship of God under the Jewish dispensation; 2nd, As sadly abused by them; and 3rd, As superseded by the spiritual worship of Christianity.

I.—The time when worship was confined to the Jews is here presupposed. The peculiarities of this worship we need not now enumerate. Our Lord specially adverts to its restricted form.

1. It was restricted with regard to persons. The Jews, being the chosen people of God, were alone admitted to his sacred ceremonies. Religious worship was not only a Divine ordinance; but a badge of their peculiar relation to Jehovah. The design of God was to preserve a church, and therefore to perpetuate his truth. They were particular in their selection of priests and sacred offices.

2. It was restricted with regard to times. God was not then, as now, equally accessible at all times. Stated periods were selected; when God specially manifested himself. This was not only consistent with the preparatory nature of Judaism; but commemorated important events in their history, and testified “things to come.”

3. It was restricted to places. Their stated religious services were held in the Temple. These places were selected that they might distinguish certain of the Divine presence and power.

II.—But this worship, though wisely ordained by the Head of the Church, was sadly perverted by this rebellious people. Circumstances which should have produced gratitude, excited jealousy and selfishness;—tending to dead

formality among the Jews, and gross darkness among the Samaritans. "Ye worship ye know not what." When Shalmaneser destroyed Samaria for rebelling, a colony of Cushites were introduced, who intermarried with them.

1. Their religion degenerated from benevolence to prejudice.

2. They misapprehended the designs of God in restricting their worship to times.

3. To places.

III.—We view this worship superseded by the spiritual worship of Christianity.

1. It is connected with the knowledge of God.

2. It is unrestricted.

3. It differs in manner, "in spirit and in truth."

This spiritual and true worship is enjoined upon us. We now have an expressive fulfilment of our Saviour's prediction.

London, 14th Sept., 1849.

SERMON IX.

WAITING UPON THE LORD.

“ But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run, and not be weary ; and they shall walk, and not faint.”—ISA. xl. 31.

Isaiah had been predicting the captivity of Israel to the Babylonians. He now hastens to vent his benevolent soul in religious consolations to the people of God. The portentous cloud of their punishment could not intercept from them the glorious events of the Gospel dispensation. A powerful appeal is made to their faith in these words and the context.

The text leads us to consider: a duty prescribed and encouraged.

I.—This duty is waiting upon God. It admits of different applications; and these are all of practical interest. It might be profitable to dwell upon them.

1. It seems directly to refer to waiting for the coming of the Messiah. Thus did the Jews, by types and sacrifices, predicting the Messiah. They were diligent.—See Simeon in the temple.

2. To the duty of religious worship. Distraction destroys contemplation and devotional feeling.

3. To the expectation of entire holiness. It does not in general take place immediately.

4. To a careful consultation of the Divine will. By prayer, by scripture, by study.

5. To waiting for the second coming of Christ. For this great event we now wait. "Blessed is that servant, whom when his Lord cometh, shall find so doing."

II.—This duty is encouraged by the promise of benefit arising from it.

1. "They shall renew their strength." This is a figure. We sometimes lose our strength.

2. "They shall mount up with wings as eagles." This expresses the most animated joy. We often enjoy seasons of it.

3. "They shall run, and not be weary." Running may refer to the ordinary course of the Christian; he is "not weary in well-doing."

4. "They shall walk, and not faint." This seems to refer to serious junctures. "Yea, though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, &c."

1. Here careless worship and empty profession are re-proved.

2. We have presented a plentiful supply for all our wants.

London, 15th Sept., 1849.

SERMON X.

CHRISTIAN MODERATION.

“ Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.”
PHIL. iv. 5.

Depraved humanity, prone to extremes. The inefficiency of human systems to counteract this evil. It is only found in Christianity.

The subject before us is Christian moderation, enforced by the near approach of the day of the Lord.

I.—We consider the duty of moderation.

1. It consists in the regulation of our dispositions in general.

2. In a proper management of our religious feelings.

3. It prohibits an undue adherence to opinions.

4. And also an improper zeal for established truths.

II.—Mark the solemn event by which he enforces this duty, “The Lord is at hand.”

1. This is forcible, as it implies the brevity of life.

2. This is impressive, as comprising the judgment.

3. It refers to the allotments of rewards and punishments.

4. Lastly, it points us to a new state of being in the invisible world.

Then let this moderation be made known. In us the world expect the standard of a holiness they know not.

Sinner, the Lord is at hand!

London, 21st Oct., 1849.

SERMON XI.

THE SANCTUARY, THE PLACE OF THE
DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS.

“Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary.”—PSALM lxxvii. 13.

The nature and attributes of Jehovah far transcend human conception. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.” He is “glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.” From this solemn and humiliating view, the cold philosophy of unsanctified reason would suggest a being, so glorious, as to despise the minute concerns of man—so mysterious, as to preclude any knowledge of his character—and so majestic, as to be utterly inaccessible to man. Such absolute ideas of the Divine perfection are derived from the vain notions of earthly honour. But inspiration induces feelings and thoughts far more worthy the character of God. Here the condescension of his majesty—the love of his greatness—the partial clearness of his mighty designs—and the compassionate justice of his moral government, demand the blended reverence, obedience, and love of his creator. Judaism, with her pompous ceremony, developed the Almighty in some of his most glorious relations to the world. Nor were the sublime contemplations of his glory

restricted to the poetry of David. The humblest faith could always realize "a part of the ways" of Deity.

Three manifestations of the Deity are comprised in this Psalm: his guardian providence, his control and influence over the material elements, and, especially, his peculiar exhibition to his people. We will not maintain that the Psalmist in the word "Sanctuary" referred exclusively to the public temple or place of worship. Doubtless, he alludes to his manifestation to his people under any circumstances. However, by using the term "Sanctuary," he clearly indicates the solemn importance ever associated with public worship. It will be profitable for us to illustrate and account for the truth contained in these words:

I.—"THY WAY, O GOD, IS IN THE SANCTUARY."

The enmity between God and our sinful race has screened the ways of his Spiritual presence from a degenerate world; but upon the Church, the footstool of his heavenly throne, he has ever abundantly reflected his glory, and in "very deed dwelt with men on the earth."

This is illustrated in the revelation of his will. Gen. xv. 9; Ex. iii. 5. Here the Israelites consulted the decisions of his will—plagues were averted—Judgments revoked. Isa. vi.

2. His way of convincing sinners is in the Sanctuary. Not only under the Jewish dispensation. 3,000 at the Pentecost.

3. His way of converting sinners is here. The peace of God is obtained by faith in Christ. The society of his worshipping people, admiringly adapted to call it into exercise.

4. His way of edifying his people. Psa. lxxiii. 37; lxviii. 5; lxiii. 2.

5. His way of extending his work is here.

II.—We inquire the reason of God's peculiar favour to the Sanctuary.

1. That the glory of his kingdom may be impressively revealed to the world. Psa. xlviii. 12, 13.

2. Because in the Sanctuary many sacred principles and feelings are induced—form of worship, unity of people—excite remembrances—stimulate to action.

3. That his presence may be long remembered.

4. Because it is a type of heaven.

1. Let us be frequent in our attendance here.

2. Let us be reverent in our devotion.

3. Let us be encouraged to faith and zeal.

We solicit your contributions.

London, 27th Oct., 1849.

SERMON XII.

GOOD WINE AT THE END OF THE FEAST.

“Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.”—JOHN ii. 10.

The miracles of Christ are eminently distinguished from the impostures of magic, by their sacred design and tendency. While eager curiosity is fully satisfied, and Divine power fully established, some important principle connected with his kingdom may be profitably induced from them all. The connexion of the text is an illustration of all this. Had the governor of the feast pursued this principle further, it would have developed a glorious characteristic in Christianity. The characteristic is the aggressiveness we may trace since the world began. We purpose, *first*, to present you with some illustrations of this feature; and *secondly*, to assign some reasons for it.

I.—We direct you to a few illustrations of this feature.

1. In the revelation of his will to the world.
2. In the prosperity of his Church.
3. In the displays of his Providence.
4. In the history of the believer.

II.—We assign some reasons.

1. In order to distinguish his kingdom from the world.
2. To impress the world with its importance.
3. To evidence the truth of Christianity.
4. To stimulate us to advancement.

“The end is not yet.”

London, 17th Nov., 1849.

SERMON XIII.

THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST.

“Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”—HEB. vii. 25.

I.—We consider the intercession of Christ.

The word signifies a pleading, or coming between. It is the continual presentation before the throne of the atonement once made at his death. Considered in this light, it implies no defect in his propitiatory sacrifice. Neither is it designed as an assistance to that sacrifice. The intercession of Christ is an indispensable office of his priesthood; and only shows the continual efficacy of a sacrifice, offered once, and fully satisfying the demands of justice. As the entering of the Levitical priesthood into the holy place from time to time was not considered from the offering of the oblation; but essential to the acceptable sprinkling of the blood before the mercy-seat: so the intercession of Christ is only the carrying out of his redeeming plan—a sprinkling of the blood before the throne for us. We are accustomed to concentrate the whole importance of redemption in the act of death alone; yet this detracts not at all from the value and necessity of his intercession. True, the point of atonement and expiation lies in his death. In expiring on the cross the great ransom was paid, and the work of reconciliation was eminently “finished;” yet

he must continue to plead our cause. And just as certain legal proceedings—as signing documents, and employing witnesses, though comparatively minute and unimportant in themselves, are strictly necessary to a valid and permanent title to property: so was the “entering of Christ into the holy-place,” though not a part of the atonement, was requisite in order to our insurance of the provided salvation. Hence the sacred writers associated the collateral events of his resurrection, ascension, and intercession with the primary and essential event of his death. “Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.”—Rom. iv. 25. “For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”—1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is ever at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercessions for us.”—Rom. viii. 34. “When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the throne of the majesty on high.”—Heb. i. 3. O, infinite wisdom! O, boundless compassion! O, rigid justice! how gloriously have you conspired in securing the validity and permanency of the redeeming scheme,—answering every demand, and sealing every covenant—establishing yet more firmly thy righteous, moral government—and blessedly ensuring a “strong consolation” to us, “who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us!”

II.—We, secondly, observe the *efficiency* of Christ’s intercession. “He is able, also, to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.”

1. By the fact of his intercession he proves himself as God to be the proper object of faith. The many proofs of

his Divinity which accompanied his incarnation constrain us to "behold him the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;" but all these evidences are sealed and consummated by his appearance on the mediatorial throne. It shows he has fulfilled the Father's will; he has entered into "the joy set before him;" he has conquered the powers of death and hell. Here is a firm and ample basis for living faith. Come, thou impenitent sinner, present thy heart to God! Repent and be converted! The inexhaustable fulness of grace will supply all your need. Come, trembling penitent! "God is your salvation, trust and be not afraid!" The treaty of reconciliation is signed: your sins, which are many, will be forgiven.

2. His ability to save is farther seen in the access which he has procured to the Father for us. "Through him, we have access by one spirit unto the Father." The oblations of Israel could not be accepted unless the high-priest entered into the holy place. Nor can our supplications and services be available without the mediation of the Son of God. We may acknowledge the supremacy and power of God; yet this cannot cancel the guilt of our innate and practical rebellion. We may determine and avow future obedience to his grace; yet justice would spurn the sacrifice without a mediator. We might appeal to every attribute of love and compassion, but in vain. The atonement of Christ must be seen. The incense of our sacrifice must be purified, by a passage through his intercession. "There is one mediator between God and men, that man Christ Jesus."

The frequent infirmities and unfaithfulness of believers require "such an High-Priest."

3. By his intercession, the promised spirit, and his accompanying blessings are sent down. "Thou hast as-

cended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord might dwell among them.”—Ps. lxxviii. 18. “It is expedient for you, that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.”—John xvi. 7. But that his intercession was the means by which the Spirit was sent, appears from John xiv. 16: “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever.” Mark the fulfilment of this crowning promise—in the extension of truth, the success of the Gospel, and the sanctification and edification of the saints. He is called the “Spirit of Christ.” All the blessings of “the latter day glory” are pendant on the meditorial throne of Christ.

4. Christ is able to save to the uttermost, because of the permanence of his intercession. “He *ever* liveth to make intercession for them.” The ardour of the Church may decline—prayer may dwindle to cold formality; but Jesus is “the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever.”

5. The place of his intercession assures us,—

III.—Lastly, observe the condition on which we partake of this salvation. We must “come unto God by him.”

Coming unto God, here as elsewhere, signifies faith. It is this which brings us morally near the Saviour. Your prayers will not be forced through the channel of a Saviour’s mediation. Your salvation has been rendered possible. The way of acceptance is open. “Come, for all things are now ready!”

1. Your capability to perform these conditions demands it.

2. The means which God has employed for your salvation demand it. Where then, you ask, is the impor-

tance of such a Saviour's intercession? In the way he has opened to the Father, and the blessings he pours upon us. This interferes not at all with your moral agency.

From what has been said, learn,—

1. The sinfulness of sin.
2. The nature of genuine prayer.
3. Be encouraged by Christ's intercession.
4. Come unto God by him.

London, 24th Nov, 1849.

SERMON XIV.

CHRIST TESTIFIED BY THE PROPHETS.

“To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.”—ACTS x. 43.

I.—The doctrine testified.

II.—The prophetic witnesses.

I.—1. It implies an ample provision made for the salvation of all men.

2. It proposes faith in the atonement, as the condition of pardon.

3. It promises “remission of sins.”

II.—“To him gave all the prophets witness.”

1. Their character favours their testimony.

2. The subjects prophesied.

3. Their remoteness from the events favours them.

4. Their numbers favour them—“all the prophets.”

5. Their partial fulfilment.

The doctrine of “remission of sins” is no “cunningly devised fable.” It is an old, Divinely inspired, well authenticated truth. Receive it as such. Then will you have the witness in yourself.

London, 15th Dec., 1849.

SERMON XV.

THE YOUNG MAN'S WAY CLEANSED.

“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.”—PSALMS cxix. 9.

The brevity of human life is a humiliating and important consideration. Every stage of it comprises a serious part of a solemn and interesting drama. Man, with all his infirmities, from the cradle to the tomb, is the most highly favoured object of the Divine regard. If one stage of his history be more responsible and attractive than another, it is youth. In infancy and childhood, the dawn of intellect is carelessly regarded as an omen of future greatness; and men generally disdain to criticise the promising features of his character. In mature manhood and old age, few, except the poet and the sage, contemplate a state so common, and so seldom inviting admiration; and so the hoary headed mortal is allowed to descend this declivity of life, and to rest peacefully in his native dust. But the youth lies between these two extremes. On him is spent the opinions and forebodings, whether of good or evil, of all. His physical energies have attained their full development. His education is completed; and like a bark fitted for the voyage, he is prepared to meet the changes and the difficulties of the sea of life. Friends look on him with

affectionate interest, and strangers with eager curiosity. His qualifications and calling are the theme of conversation. Satan secretly devises destruction. His associates fondly wish him prosperity ; but cannot point the way. He thoughtfully purposes to himself a solemn question, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" A voice from the sacred oracle responds, "By taking heed thereto according to thy word." 1st, The young man's way; 2nd, A question proposed concerning it; 3rd, An appropriate answer.

I.—The young man's way.

It is of vast importance.—

1. The future interests of life are based upon it. Habits formed now, will stamp the future man. All experience goes to show the misfortune of neglecting this auspicious period.

2. It may be a way of personal happiness. The morning forebodes the day.

3. It may be a way of usefulness. Thousands may be benefitted by his influence, or destroyed.

4. It will be a way of changes. They are the lot of all. The most prosperous must submit.

5. It tends to an eternal destiny. He must go the way of all flesh. This is the end of all. How important the young man's way!

II.—Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?

A question distinguished from that of many peculiar to Christianity.

1. It supposes the pollution of the natural heart.

2. This question inquires concerning his future interests in life.

3. It refers to his eternal welfare.

III.—An admirable answer. “By taking heed thereto, according to thy word.” This word is the best interpreter of Providence.

1. By obtaining at the commencement a change of heart.
2. By studying the path of Providence.
3. Guarding against the seductions of the adversary.
4. By continuance in the way of holiness.

[Address young men. Urge the claims of Sabbath Schools.]

London, 19th Dec., 1849.

SERMON XVI.

GOD IN THE MIDST OF THE CHURCH.

“Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion ; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”—ISA. xii. 6.

Christianity is a restorative system. From its commencement it has been gradually leading man to brighter revelations of the Deity. The climax of its glory on earth, is called the latter day glory. The Spiritual glory of the Redeemer's Kingdom must be expressly manifested to the world. God first shines into Zion, that she may reflect his saving lustre to mankind around. This chapter relates to the bringing in of the Jews after a series of judgments. But its sentiments are no less applicable to the general Church of God, of every name, under the Christian dispensation. Our text alludes to the brightest manifestations of the Divine presence on this side eternity. “The Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”

I.—We lead you to contemplate God in the midst of the Church.

From the prophetic character of the text, it will at once appear, that these terms apply to the future Christian dispensation. Isaiah speaks in the present time, the more vividly to portray the glorious promise.

1. “God in the midst of Zion,” presupposes the preparation of his people for such a bright manifestation of

himself. Dust and ashes cannot approach his majesty. Sinful man cannot enter the presence of a pure God. A revelation of the Deity must be either suited to our impressions,—or our capacities must be exalted: we have both. The dazzling majesty of Heaven modified to us; and ourselves “raised to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

2. “God in the midst,” implies the exercise of rule and defence over them. “Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.” He rules there; and “his people are willing in the day of his power.” This authority extended even to the world without. “Among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”

3. “God in the midst,” implies a mutual intimacy. “Fear not, for I am with thee.” As a parent in a family, his children commune with him with filial confidence.

4. “God in the midst,” answers the immoveability of the Church. “God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved:” Ps. xlv. 5. Omnipotence is at the helm.

5. “God in the midst,” ensures the prosperity of the Church. He is in the hearts of his people; he issues his word, organizes means, appoints institutions.

6. “God is in the midst” of the Church, as the centre of blessing.

II.—The influence his presence should exert upon his highly privileged people. “Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion.”

1. This is the language of awe. “Lo God is here!”
2. It may be the language of praise.
3. It may express fervent supplication.
4. It expressly signifies a proclamation to others. Here is a duty incumbent on all.

SERMON XVII.

SIMEON IN THE TEMPLE.

“And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon ; and the same man was just and devout ; waiting for the consolation of Israel ; and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

“And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.

“And he came by the Spirit into the Temple : and when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

“Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word :

“For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

“Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people ;

“A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”

LUKE ii. 25—32.

Though the history of nations and the state of the Jewish people, conspired to prove the genuineness of the infant Messiah, a sinful world were careless concerning him. But in the spiritual world, this great event exerted a different influence. Angels sang, “Glory to God in the highest, on the earth peace, good will towards men.” The eye of faith in the church militant could also discern the beaming glories of the sacred era. Thus was it with Simeon.

We claim your attention to—

I.—His character.

1. He was “just and devout.”

2. He “waited for the consolation of Israel.”

3. “The Holy Ghost was upon him.”

II.—The circumstances of his worship.

1. It had been “revealed to him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.”

2. Influenced by this spirit, “he came into the Temple.”

3. The parents bring the infant Jesus to be dedicated.

III.—His invocation.

1. “Mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

2. It was “prepared before the face of all people.”

3. “A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” Hence he was resigned.

London, 24th Dec., 1849.

SERMON XVIII.

THE CHRISTIAN "ACCEPTABLE TO GOD,
AND APPROVED OF MEN."

"For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men."—ROM. xiv. 18.

Man, a dependent and social being. Religion teaches us to secure the favour of God and the approval of each other. This can be done without compromising any principle of truth. State the connexion.

I.—The Christian "acceptable to God." The whole work of Christ was in conjunction with the Father's will. And he that serveth Christ is approved of God.

1. Serving Christ "in these things," we fulfil the purpose of God in our creation.

2. In our redemption.

3. In the gift of the Holy Ghost.

4. In the means of grace.

II.—He is approved of men. That is, by all men.

1. There exists in man a principle that appreciates virtue.

2. The happiness of the believer appears to reason.

3. It is the interest of man.

4. Or the Apostle may speak prospectively, in reference to his final approval of men at the judgment day.

1. Let us learn a proper regard for the true disciples of Christ.

2. See the standard of a Christian.

3. Let us feel our responsibility.

Brantford, 1st March, 1850.*

* He was there at the time of the composition of this sketch, on a visit to his mother and family, while his father supplied for him.

SERMON XIX.

A CHARGE TO THE RICH.

“ Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy : That they do good, be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate ; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

1 TIM. vi. 17—19.

The authority of the Gospel to rebuke the rich.

I.—The dangers incident to their state.

1. Pride.
2. Anxiety.
3. Neglect of Christian ordinances.
4. Spiritual ease.

II.—An important charge.

1. “ Be not high-minded.”
2. “ Trust not in uncertain riches.”
3. Trust “ in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.”
4. “ That they do good, that be rich in good works.”
5. “ Ready to distribute.”
6. “ Willing to communicate.”
7. “ Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

London, 9th March, 1850.

SERMON XX.

CHRISTIAN CONFIDENCE.

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.”—HEB. x. 35.

Clearly established principles are essential to moral rectitude and abiding happiness. We have many reasons to presume, that notwithstanding the imperfection and degeneracy of man, the human mind cannot rest complacently on erroneous theories. Look at the heathen world, and mark the indecision and uncertainty exemplified in their opinions and practice, plainly depicting the conflict of speculation and truth in their breasts. Socrates, though admitting the immortality of the soul, was utterly perplexed as to the character of man's eternal destiny: and thus neither he nor his disciples were impelled by any solid and elevating motive to pursue the path of virtue. Cicero, though superior to the superstitious age in which he lived, had but little stronger stimulus to virtue, than the happiness which it conferred on earth. His mental visions could view rewards no higher, and his anticipations settled on earthly good, and feasted their desires on the limited pleasures of this transient scene. Look at the infidel! Tortured by the light that shines into his darkness, his spirit writhes in uneasiness, and groans in terror. While he dares present his ingenious speculations to the world,

an inward voice proclaims his guilt; and leaves him trembling in bewildering uncertainty. Look at the impenitent sinner. Though in the society of the scorning multitude of transgressors, he assumes their maddening laugh and hellish blasphemies; yet in the reflections of solitude, conscience spreads the cloud of guilt around him, and all is misery and disquietude. With terrific, though unseen power, the awful voice of sacred truth thunders its tremendous verdict to his heart, and shakes the empire of the man of sin.

“In vain his trembling conscience seeks,
Some solid ground to rest upon;
With long despair his spirit breaks,
Till he applies to God alone.”

Look at the contrite sinner. His self-righteousness has been shivered by the lightning of the law; and his soul trembles in anguish and uncertainty, till his faith builds upon the rock of salvation. Therefore, by the moral evils and sore miseries attendant upon error and uncertainty, Christianity, displaying doctrines the most excellent, sublime, and unequivocal, demands our universal veneration and attention. The all-wise Jehovah, seeing that clear and decided views of himself; the duties incumbent upon us; and the final rewards annexed to those duties, were essential to our happiness, and the maintenance of his moral government, has established his truth upon immovable pillars; and presented it to us for our confident reception. The Apostle Paul, deprecating the dangers to which the Hebrew church was exposed by the means of Judaizing impostures, fairly discusses every objection to our favoured dispensation; and establishes its divinity by incontrovertible arguments. Then, appealing more personally to the past experience of the church, and warning

them of unsteadiness, he says, "Call to remembrance the former days:" verse 32. By the simplicity with which you once received a faithfully dispensed Gospel; by the steadfastness you evinced to your living head; by the joys of holiness that glowed within your breasts; by that steadfast hope, which ever pointed your faith to "the better inheritance." "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

The nature and value of the Christian's confidence. The exhortation furnished in the text concerning it.

I.—The nature of the Christian's confidence.

The word indicates deep conviction: firm persuasion. It is not a natural but a spiritually implanted principle. A veil of thick darkness separates the dignities of the Divine nature, and the glories of the spiritual kingdom from the vision of the natural man. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned:" 1 Cor. ii. 14. It is a confidence which is of the operation of the Divine Spirit.

1. It is induced by a knowledge and clear conviction of the truth of the Gospel. Had the evidences of Christianity been left wholly in mystery, in vain we had groped for the light of truth, or sought some solid basis for our faith and hope. Blessed be God! we are not left in this predicament. "We have line upon line, precept upon precept." Were it not for the inveteracy of prejudice and the selfishness of sin, none would doubt the authenticity of inspired truth. Absolute ignorance is incompatible with any state of grace. Our faith is not an illusion of fancy; the dream of a morbid imagination, "it stands in the power of God."

2. It is promoted by a personal experience of the blessings of salvation. It was to this experience that the

Apostle appealed in the connexion of the text. Such are the influences of grace, that the vision of faith cannot be satisfactory and clear, till we have felt the renewing energies of the Holy Ghost.

3. It is a believing expectation of all the precious promises of truth. To the believer they are "yea and amen."

4. It is an hope of immortality. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth in to that within the veil."

II.—The value of his confidence. It "hath great recompense of reward." The expression is peculiar and forcible. Its value is unspeakable. And in dwelling on this feature of our subject, I must appeal to the special subjects of indwelling grace:—

1. It brings with it that basis of all true happiness, a satisfaction of our acceptance with God. This is the foundation of the superstructure of grace in the heart. The grand remedy of the perplexity and misery of sin. It carries an unequivocal evidence. Constitutional diffidence, or melancholy, cannot drown the testifying voice of the Spirit of God. The privilege of all. The accusations of conscience cease. The conflict of flesh and spirit is over. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" Rom. v. 1.

2. It opens to the mind vast funds of spiritual knowledge. The discoveries of the mind in a state of indecision are opinions, not settled truth. Many of them tend rather to annoy than satisfy the soul. But let faith be once satisfied of its acceptance with God, and it will explore with reverence, yet confidence, the deep things of God. Eph. iii. 16—18.

3. It stimulates to spiritual ambition, in the attainment

of spiritual good; in the performances of spiritual duties; in the endurance of trials.

4. It brings an earnest of future bliss. Cheered by the glorious prospect of immortality, "We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

5. But what are these preparatory principles of joy, to that heavenly felicity which it opens to the believing soul.

"There, faith in sight is swallowed up,

"And prayer in endless praise."

III.—The Apostle's exhortation. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

The peaceful Church had been invaded by the seductions of Judaizing teachers.

1. "Cast not away," because of these erroneous doctrines.

2. Because of the wordly pleasures you might secure.

3. Because of trials and afflictions.

4. Because of gloomy reflections.

1. Let me urge this duty on you as Christians.

2. Sinner, I exhort you by the value of this confidence to secure it!

London, 15th March, 1850.

SERMON XXI.

HEAVENLY WISDOM.

“But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy.”—JAMES iii. 17.

Earthly wisdom deceptive ; true wisdom from God.

1. The nature ; 2. The properties of this wisdom.

I.—The nature of this wisdom. Wisdom in its common acceptation, signifies either natural intelligence, or acquired knowledge. In consistence with both these meanings, it may be defined, “a faculty exercised in forming the best plans, for the attainment of the best ends.” This definition will appeal with equal force to every man’s candid judgment. Arguments drawn from experience would attest the claims of religion to this. But enough to say, it is derived from God. If this wisdom of the world be from God, why is man so miserable ?

1. But here is a principle imparted by a being of infinite knowledge.

2. Whose foresight extends through ages.

3. The displays of his wisdom are connected with the utmost compassion of benevolence.

II.—The properties of this wisdom.

1. It is “pure.”

2. “Then peaceable.”

3. "Gentle, and easy to be entreated."
 4. "Full of mercy and good fruits."
 5. "Without partiality."
 6. "And without hypocrisy."
1. Enforce the practical exemplification of this wisdom on all believers.
 2. Urge the importance of its attainment on sinners.

London, 22nd March, 1850.

SERMON XXII.

THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST.

“He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty, that we should desire him.”—ISA. liii. 2.

The evidence of prophecy.

I.—The aspect in which Christ is presented to us in the text. “He hath no form nor comeliness.” Some suppose these words refer to the personal appearance of the Messiah. Others, that they refer only to his humiliation.

How appropriately may they be used,—

1. In striking contrast with his pre-existent glory.
2. As a disappointment of the erroneous expectations of men.
3. In reference to the peculiar sorrows of his life.
4. With regard to his passion and death.

II.—But the text, by implication, teaches there is some beauty in Christ. Though not detected by the eye of sense. It lies under the veil of humanity. There is beauty—

1. In the principle by which he was moved to offer himself.
2. In the design of his life.
3. In the object of his death.
4. In the glorious results.

London, 27th March, 1850.

SERMON XXIII.

THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS.

“Jesus wept.”—JOHN xi. 35.

Our Lord identified himself with families, as well as public circles of society. His most stupendous miracles were rare, yet striking. You will regard this text rather as a clue to the interesting narrative with which it stands in connection, than as the immediate foundation of our present remarks.

I.—Mark the circumstances preceding the death of Lazarus.

1. A pious, respectable family.
2. Was the brother of Mary.
3. Jesus refused to raise him from sickness.
4. He went to his usual ministerial duties.

II. Contemplate the circumstances connected with the miracle.

1. He knew though absent the event of the death of Lazarus.
2. He tries the faith of the sisters.
3. Mark the sorrow of our Lord. “He groaned in the

spirit and was troubled." He "wept" in sympathy; in contemplation of death, because of their unbelief.

4. Martha disbelieves—is reproved.

5. Christ acknowledges the token that his prayer was heard.

III.—Observe the miracle.

1. It was performed by his own inherent, Divine power

2. "Lazarus, come forth!"

Apply the subject spiritually.

London, 28th March, 1850.

SERMON XXIV.

BELIEVERS RISEN WITH CHRIST.

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”—COL. iii. 1.

Insufficiency of human reason—Errors which it produced—Types unnecessary under the Christian dispensation—Paul’s argument, and exhortation. We have, Believers risen with Christ—Heavenly things presented to their view—An exhortation founded on their dignified position.

I.—Believers are risen with Christ.. This is the prerogative of the Christian dispensation.

1. In the scale of being.

2. In the attainment of Divine knowledge.

(1.) Our knowledge of God is increased—his will, &c.

(2.) Our knowledge of his word is increased.

(3.) Our knowledge of our own hearts is increased.

(4.) Our knowledge of the heavenly world is increased.

3. In sacred privileges. Intimacy with God.

4. In being called to participate in his final glory.

II.—Heavenly things presented to their view.

1. A glorious and important place. “Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”

2. Subjects for our investigation. "The things that are above."

III.—The practical exhortation, "seek!" Implying effort.
Faith is a work.

1. Regard them as intimately associated with your salvation.

2. "Seek" them, that you be encouraged by the glorious examples there developed.

3. "Seek" them, by frequent meditation.

4. "Seek" them, by earnest prayer.

1. How important is the Christian character.

2. Sinner, are you risen with Christ?

London, 30th March, 1850.

SERMON XXV.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, THE ESSENTIAL
PORTION OF EVERY TRUE BELIEVER.

“ Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

ROM. viii. 9.

We propose to explain, and to enforce this requisition.
I.—We proceed to explain the terms of the text.

1. “He is none of his.” That is, of Christ’s. What is it to be his? The context shows them to be the acceptable children of God; they are created by his power—preserved by his providence—fed from his table—and clothed from his ward-robe. But this general meaning cannot be applied to the terms—“of his”—or the children of Christ. “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts:” Gal. v. 24. Christ is the anointed of the Father, and in order to be his, we must fulfil the saving purposes of him, “who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:” Tit. ii. 14.

(1.) To be Christ’s, is to be a believer in his doctrines. By his doctrines I do not mean all those minor opinions, which to some extent, may be entertained without affecting the essential truths of Christianity; but those great doc-

trines which are interwoven with our redemption and salvation. In them all true believers are united; and they mutually recognize "One Lord, one faith, one baptism:" the being of God, depravity of the human heart, the atonement of Christ, inward holiness, necessary to present and eternal happiness. These doctrines have reflected an instructive light upon their understanding; and thence proceeded to convict their conscience, and to renovate their heart. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in their hearts to give the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ:" 2 Cor. iv. 6. They believe with hearts unto righteousness; and believing, they have life through his name.

(2.) To be his, is to be adopted in his family. Christ, by his sacrifice, has procured all the privileges of the sons of God. "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Through him they have constant access unto the Father. Through the merit of his sufferings and death all their guilt is cancelled. "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit:" Rom. viii. 1.

(3.) It is to walk in accordance with his will. As they are his property, he claims their service; as they are his children, he claims their obedience: and as in redeeming them, he procured every thing necessary for entire conformity to his law, he demands their allegiance in righteousness as his due. "Ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and spirits which are his." The covenant of grace, in superseding the covenant of works, demands perfect holiness; and its commandments are not grievous but joyous.

(4.) Being Christ's, also implies that we are heirs of his kingdom. By him "we have access unto this grace, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." "If children

then heirs, heirs with God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together:" Rom. viii. 17. Indwelling grace promotes and cherishes a hope of this; and the abiding testimony of the Holy Ghost, which is the earnest of our redemption, ever points us in cheering promises, to that "inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

2. We inquire, further, as to the Apostle's meaning: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ." The Spirit is the third person in the everblessed and glorious Trinity: not a quality nor an appellation of Christ. He is called the Spirit of Christ, because he has proceeded from the Father and the Son; and his influences have been more specially manifested, since the Son of Man was glorified. He has been sent by Christ. He is the Great Agent of the covenant of grace. What is it to have the Spirit of Christ? In one sense, all have him. The former part of the verse explains it: "If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Agreeable to this are the words of our Lord. John xiv. 17: "Even the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him: for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you."

(1.) This implies that he is satisfied with us. Light cannot dwell with darkness. The heart in a state of unbelief is closed against God.

(2.) That he continues to instruct us. "He will guide you into all truth."

(3.) That he continues to sanctify us. Mal. iii. 3.

II.—Enforce this requisition. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Unless this Divine agent dwell in us, we cannot be the sons of God, accepted in the Beloved.

1. Did we say, to be Christ's, was to be a believer in his truth?

(1.) Ignorance demands the Spirit.

(2.) The darkness of unbelief.

2. Did we say, to be his, was to be adopted into his family? If we be sons, God must send the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba Father."

3. Did we say it was to walk conformably to his will?

4. Did we say it was to be heirs of his kingdom?

1. Learn to distinguish between external and internal holiness.

2. In order to true holiness, you must be constant possessors of the Spirit of Christ.

INTRODUCTION.

There is a variety in the characters of believers. Yet all must be measured by this rule.

London, 19th April, 1850.

SERMON XXVI.

THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

“Neither is there any creature, that is not manifest in his sight ; but all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

HEB. iv. 13.

I.—Demonstrate the Infinite Knowledge of God.

1. It is seen in the wise disposal of all created things in the natural world.

2. It is manifested in his moral government.

3. It is evident from the character of his word.

4. It appears in the manner of extending his kingdom.

5. It is exhibited in the operations of his grace.

II.—Deduce a few important reflections.

1. How should it humble us in all our pursuits of knowledge.

2. It should make us fear to oppose his purposes.

3. It should teach us implicit confidence in his word.

It should strengthen our faith in his sustaining and sanctifying grace.

INTRODUCTION.

Men in proportion to their virtue secure our confidence : but God, a being of infinite holiness and wisdom, claims our implicit faith.

London, 25th April, 1850.

SERMON XXVII.

THE WEARY AND HEAVY LADEN INVITED
TO CHRIST.

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”—Matt. xi. 28.

The tender compassion of our blessed Lord.

1. The Characters invited; 2. The Invitation given; 3. The encouraging Promise.

I.—The Characters invited: “Ye that labour and are heavy laden.”

1. The Jews were at this time in subjection to the Romans.

2. The ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation were grievous.

3. But here our Lord expressly refers to the penitent.

4. The words may be applied to the afflicted believer.

II.—The Invitation given: “Come unto me.”

1. Receive my doctrines.

2. Believe upon me with a heart unto righteousness.

(1.) This implies the rejection of every other atonement.

(2.) An implicit confidence in the atonement of Christ.

III.—The encouraging Promise: “I will give you rest.”

1. Rest from the influence of conflicting opinions.

2. Rest from the allurements of Satan.

3. Rest from inward condemnation.

4. Rest in a life of holiness.

5. Rest in everlasting glory.

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul?”

London, 25th April, 1850.

SERMON XXVIII.

LITTLE SINS.

“Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one; O! let me escape thither, (Is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.”

GEN. xix. 20.

The visitations of God's wrath, while they are severe judgments to the rebellious and ungodly, are frequently chastisements to the righteous. In illustrating this subject we shall consider some of the criteria, by which men judge of little sins; and the danger of so doing.

I.—Those sins do not appear so heinous, which are not individually prohibited in the moral law. From the Divine law we must deduce principles for our whole practice.

II.—By contrast—see Lot, and the imperfect obedience of some believers.

III.—By viewing minor sins and their consequences alone. We forget they bring a motley train behind them.

London, 25th April, 1850.

SERMON XXIX.

CHRISTIAN PERSEVERANCE.

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus, the Lord, so walk ye in him.”
COL. ii. 6.

The caution and solicitude of the Apostle Paul, for the welfare and prosperity of his infant churches.—Thoughtlessness of the responsibility of our character, a prevalent evil.—It is checked in the text.—A sameness, though a progression in the divine life.

I.—As ye have received him in humility.

II.—As ye have received him in faith, so retain. “The just shall live by faith.”

III.—As ye have received him in the use of his appointed ordinances, continue to observe them. Spirituality must be sustained by the grace supplied through them.

IV.—As ye have received him in simplicity, so walk in him: verse 8th.

V.—As ye have received him expecting additional supplies of grace, seek to realize them. “Grow in grace.”

1. Let us frequently review the time of our conversion.
2. Sinner, be not discouraged.

SERMON XXX.

THE CHRISTIAN COMFORTED BY THE
EXAMPLE OF CHRIST.

“Therefore, Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

“Let us go forth, therefore, unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.—HEB. xiii. 12, 13.

I.—We have here a striking example.

1. “He suffered without the gate.” This refers to the sin offering, which, when the Jews were in the wilderness, was carried without the camp. And when the Temple was built at Jerusalem, was carried without the gate of the city. See this in the sufferings of Christ.

2. The design: “That he might sanctify the people with his own blood.”

II.—Our obligations are enforced: “Let us, therefore, go forth, &c.”

1. Here our sufferings are dignified.

2. This is a reasonable demand.

3. It is connected with abundant consolation.

1. How ungrateful is impatience.

2. Self-denial is incumbent on all Christians.

London, 25th April, 1850.

SERMON XXXI.

ACKNOWLEDGING GOD.

“In all things acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

PROV. iii. 16.

Promises in Scripture are connected with the injunction of religious duties.

I.—The Duty : “In all thy ways acknowledge him.”

This acknowledgement must be adapted to,—

1. Avowed infidelity—by believing the truth.
2. To practical infidelity—by obeying the truth.
3. To sinful shame—by confessing him in all our ways, business, and conversation.

II.—Its connection with the Promises: “He shall direct thy paths.”

1. Here is a necessary connexion. Virtue is its own reward; obedience is happiness.
2. Religion prepares us for the Divine will.
3. This direction is the reward of obedience.

London, 27th April, 1850.

SERMON XXXII.

ATTAINING THE "FULL REWARD."

"Look to yourselves, that we lose not the things that we have wrought ; but that we receive a full reward."—2 JOHN 8.

Ambition stimulates mankind in the pursuit of wealth, honour, happiness, and ease. Not always in the attainment of spiritual blessings.

I.—A danger supposed: "losing our full reward."

1. A great portion of many blessings may be forfeited.
2. Our whole reward may be lost.

II.—The danger may be averted by attention to the exhortation: "Look to yourselves!"

1. This will promote humility.
2. Diligence in the improvement of privileges.
3. An aspiration after entire holiness.
4. A conscientious and persevering observance of the practical duties of religion.

Enforce the duty of seeking the full reward.

London, 27th April, 1850.

SERMON XXXIII.

CHRIST PRECIOUS TO THE BELIEVER.

“Unto you, therefore, which believe, he is precious.”—1 PET. ii. 7.

Christ was the theme of Paul’s epistles.

The believers mentioned in the text are the regenerated.

I.—To them Christ is precious as a Redeemer.

II.—Christ is precious as an Intercessor.

III.—Christ is precious as an Instructor.—

IV.—He is precious as an Example.

V.—He is precious as our Hope.

Are we thus firmly united to him as our head?

As we grow in grace, the value of Christ will be more thoroughly felt.

London, 27th April, 1850.

SERMON XXXIV.

SPIRITUAL MELANCHOLY CONSOLED.

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.”—Ps. xliii. 5.

Salvation is a great deliverance. Yet some monuments remain to remind us of the “rock whence we were hewn, and of the hole of the pit whence we were digged.”—These are the afflictions of which we all are the common partakers. This and the preceding pathetic psalms were written by David, when Absalom rebelled. Here we have—The Christian cast down by trouble, and lifted up by hope.

I.—The Christian cast down by trouble.

1. By constitutional infirmity.
2. From a sense of sin remaining in us.
3. From the reflection of unfaithfulness.
4. From the state of the world.
5. From personal afflictions of a temporal character.

II.—Why art thou cast down?

We should be comforted,—

1. By the consideration of his providential care.
2. By the rich provision made for our entire holiness.
3. By the promises which authorize us to expect the universal spread of the Gospel.
4. By the sufficiency of divine grace for our various adversities.
5. By the hope of exemption from trouble.

London, 27th April, 1850.

SERMON XXXV.

COMFORT FOR THE BEREAVED.

(FUNERAL OCCASION.)

“Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”—1 THESS. iv. 18.

Death, a source of terror to man—Dark to the Pagan—Gloomy to the Jew—Bright to the Christian. State the words. We proceed to consider their truth and comforting tendency.

I.—The doctrine to be proved is the Resurrection of the body, and the eternal happiness of the Believer.

1. It is evident from the design of God in the creation of man.

2. From the unequal distribution of happiness and misery in the world.

3. From the work of Redemption.

4. From the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The body must be raised to accomplish the happiness of the soul.

II.—Their comforting tendency.

1. They speak of the way prepared by Jesus.

2. By allusion to the personal appearance of Christ.

3. By the honour promised to the saints.—“The dead in Christ shall rise first.”

4. By the assurance of eternal bliss.—“So shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Address the believers and the unrighteous.

London, 27th April, 1859.

SERMON XXXVI.

EASE IN ZION.

“Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the Mountains of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came.”—Amos vi. 1.

The degeneracy of modern from primitive religion.

I.—The characters described.—“Them that are at ease in Zion.”

They may enjoy some of the love of God.

II.—The evils which they incur.

1. The purposes of God are frustrated, and thereby our usefulness is prevented.

2. Declension in spirituality.

3. They are preventing the pleasures of zealous co-operation with God.

4. They are excluding the ultimate reflection of a well spent life.

London, 27th April, 1850.

SERMON XXXVII.

E R R O R .

“Do not err, my beloved brethren.”—JAMES i. 16.

The necessity of practical direction to the church.

1. The nature; 2. The remedy of religious error.

I.—The nature of error.

Signifies to wander.

Sometimes consists in error in—

1. Doctrine.

2. In feeling.

3. In practice.

II.—It may be prevented and remedied.

1. By the the careful study of inspired truth.

2. By the diligent study of Divine Providence.

3. By persevering prayer.

4. By walking in the light and following after holiness.

London, 27th April, 1850.

SERMON XXXVIII.

HEARING THE GOSPEL.

“Take heed, therefore, how ye hear.”—LUKE viii. 18.

Necessity of a living ministry.—The manner of hearing.

- I.—Hear frequently.
- II.—Hear reverently.
- III.—Hear attentively.
- IV.—Hear prayerfully.
- V.—Hear in a spirit congenial to the subject.
- VI.—Hear for eternity.

“Take heed.”

London, 27th April, 1850.

SERMON XXXIX.

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

“Two men went up into the Temple, &c.”—LUKE xviii. 10-15.

Christ's knowledge of the human mind. Connection.

1. The similarities; and 2. The differences, between them.

I.—The similarities between them.

1. They agreed that the object of worship was God.
2. That the place of worship was the Temple.
3. That righteousness was acceptable to God.

II.—The differences between them.

1. In manner. “The Pharisee stood with himself:” “the Publican afar off.”
2. In spirit. The Pharisee proved self-sufficient: “the Publican smote upon his breast.”
3. In prayer. The Pharisee's long: the Publican's short.
4. In the result. “I tell you this man, &c.

Learn the true spirit of prayer.

London, 27th April, 1850.

SERMON XL.

THE DANGER OF "HARDENING THE NECK."

"He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth the neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."—Prov. xxix. 1.

In improving these solemn words, your attention is invited to the demonstration of these two propositions:—

1. That frequent warnings and Gospel instructions, when neglected, tend to hardness of heart. 2. The punishment to which this impenitence leads will be sudden and irrevocable.

I.—Frequent warnings and Gospel instructions, when neglected, tend to hardness of heart.

1. The mind, frequently brought under the influence of Divine knowledge, judges itself in elevating and pleasing ideas.

2. The heart has consequently a partial change in its feelings. This inspires presumption.

3. The life also is changed.

4. New associations in life are formed.

5. Accustomed to the terrors of the law, the conscience becomes seared; and—

6. The heart careless.

II.—The punishment to which this leads will be sudden and irrevocable.

Amplify on Destruction.

1. It will be sudden.

2. It will be without remedy.

(1.) Repentance cannot remedy it.

(2.) The atonement and mediation of Christ cannot remedy it.

(3.) Time cannot remedy it.

INTRODUCTION.

The free-agency of man is not derogatory to the power and wisdom of God.

London, 5th May, 1859.

SERMON XLI.

THE NEW CREATION.

“Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold all things are become new.”—2 Cor. v. 17.

In our text the new creation is—1. Stated; and 2. Described.

I.—Mark the new creation as stated here: “If any man be in Christ.”

This phraseology is frequently employed by the Apostle, and is full of meaning. 1 Thess. iv. 16; Phil. ii. 1; Rom. viii. 1, 2; 1 Cor. i. 30; Gal. iii. 28.

1. Under the Christian dispensation.

2. He is inseparably united to Christ.

This union produces a new creation. “He is a new creature;” or, as Mr. Wesley renders the words, “a new creation.”

1. This presupposes the depravity of the human heart. If the heart were not totally depraved, it would need reformation, not regeneration. But such is the influence of sin, that it is interwoven with the whole faculties of our intellectual and moral nature. “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”

2. This change is promoted by the renewing grace of God. The Trinity consulted concerning the material

creation. So each of them is prominently engaged in this. The Father sends the Son, and accepts his sacrifice. The Son becomes "obedient to death," and "offers himself without spot to God." The Spirit again moves upon the face of the waters. The soul regains its primitive purity. In him, as sin hath reigned unto death, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

II.—Mark now the great change. Here we can dwell more at large. We can admire and contemplate the results of this great change, better than investigate the intermediate operations of the Spiritual Creator. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit." This change is most impressively seen in contrast with the natural state of man.

1. This great change brings the soul into new relations with God.

(1.) Formerly he was a disobedient rebel—now an obedient subject.

(2.) Formerly he was a servant—now he is a son.

2. His intellectual views of God expand.

3. His feelings towards God are new.

4. He is new in his regard for the means of grace.

5. In his associations: "This people shall be my people."

6. In his practice: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

1. Entire holiness must be the privilege of believers on earth.

2. The continuance in any sinful habit is inconsistent with this change.

This change may be yours. Look for it to-day. "O

thou who desirest truth in the inward parts, purge us with hyssop, and we shall be clean! Wash us, and we shall be whiter than snow? Create within us clean hearts, and renew right spirits within us!" May God grant it for his mercy's sake!

INTRODUCTION.

Man on this side eternity, is called to be the subject of two kingdoms: the kingdom of this world, under which he is placed either by the sanction or permission of Providence; and the kingdom of Christ, under which all true believers are placed by grace. In the one, men are esteemed in proportion to their office, wealth, and education. In the other, men are esteemed according to the merits of their holiness, humility, integrity, and faith. Yet as many of the laws of civil government are founded on the principles of the law of God, a certain similarity exists between these two kingdoms. And this similarity renders it possible to conform to the law of God, and generally to the ordinances of man for the Lord's sake. Christianity interferes not with the regulations or courtesies of civil society; but rather enforces them by the purer principles of that love which is the fulfilling of the law. She inculcates "Honour, to whom honour; and tribute, to whom tribute is due." "Dearly beloved, if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

However, when the incumbent duties of our holy religion interfere with the dignities and social order of any community—and cross the boundaries of politeness and fashion, we ought to obey God rather than man. And though our obedience to his requirements may sting the pride and rouse the vanity of the haughty, we must brave all oppositions and bow to the mandate of the Supreme.

When the Apostle Paul preached the Gospel to the refined sons of literary Corinth, his "speech and his preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." They, doubtless, wondered, that he, a man of humble pretensions and the minister of a persecuted and despised sect, should use such plainness of speech to them, regardless of their literary honours, or their dignified offices.

He apologizes for his faithfulness in this chapter upon three considerations: "We must all stand before the judgment of Christ; The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again." And in the connection of the text he says, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh." As men we are willing to pay all deference to your dignity and all submission to your power; but as the ministers of Christ we must perform our duty irrespective of your worldly honours. We must view you as your God views you, sinful souls redeemed by the blood of Christ. We must for the time being forget all earthly distinctions; and address to the peasant and the king—the learned and the unlearned, the whole counsel of God. "Therefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

Brethren, in the name of God, I will thus faithfully warn you to-day, as the objects of a Father's love—the purchase of a Saviour's blood—and as the candidates of an unexplored eternity.

London, 3th May, 1850.

SERMON XLII.

THE EXCUSES OF SINNERS ANSWERED.

“And they all with one consent began to make excuse.” —LUKE xiv. 18.

The excuses of sinners are too many to enumerate; but we would direct your attention to a few of the most usual and important.

I.—I have too many worldly possessions.

II.—I have many temporal embarrassments.

III.—I have ungodly relations and friends.

IV.—The opinions of Christians disagree.

V.—The professors of religion are inconsistent.

VI.—Religious restraints are too severe.

VII.—I am too unworthy.

VIII.—I do not feel my need of conversion.

In proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, the messenger of mercy is discouraged by two classes of characters: the profane Infidel and the formal Christian. In the Infidel he has to contest with a variety of ingenious objections to the authenticity and the doctrines of Holy Scripture; and to overpower the subtlety of carnal reasoning with the manly force of reasonable and sacred arguments. This can be done with comparative ease. Had we to deal with reason only, truth would soon triumph in the conquest and the salvation of many souls.

In the formal Christian, he meets with other difficulties. Distorted arguments, chased from their "refuge of lies," are exposed and ridiculed to his view; and reason is compelled to acquiesce in the force of reason and Scriptural truth. But still he is unwilling to leave the pleasures of sin, and seek an experimental acquaintance with the pleasures of renewing grace. Argument after argument reflects its beams upon his understanding in vain. The spiritual banquet of Gospel blessings is spread before him, but it fails to attract his attention. Sabbath after Sabbath, sermon after sermon, either by argument, instruction, or warning, convey the joyous invitation. "Come, for all things are now ready," Nevertheless, now as formerly, "They all begin with one consent to make excuse."

London, 11th May, 1850.

SERMON XLIII.

THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.

“Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?”—JER. xxxii. 27.

The doctrine of our text is the Omnipotence of God. In the consideration of this subject, our contemplations may encroach upon other attributes of the Deity; for these attributes are all essentially connected as the several links of a chain; so that in surveying one, we are let to glance at many, or of the rest. May the Spirit of truth be given to guide us into all truth! Let me then invite your attention to a few of the most impressive illustrations of Divine power.

I.—We present to you its displays in creation. The Mosaic account of the creation, though simple, cannot fail to induce the reverence and humble gratitude of every spiritually-enlightened mind.

1. “God said, let there be light, and there was light.” Light immediately obeying the mandate of the Sovereign Jehovah. Here we see no chemical process, no tedious machinations, but Divine power commanding darkness into light. And let us survey the glorious firmament, bespangled with all its glittering orbs, and see the wisdom and grandeur which every observation develops to our gaze, and what is the conclusion of every candid mind,

unbiassed by the philosophy of haughty reason? Like the Psalmist, he devoutly sings:—"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. Ps. xix. 1, 2, 3, 4.

2. When light had thus irradiated the universe, being distributed by some bodies, and being reflected by others, the vegetable kingdom next appeared. "God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth: and it was so."

3. Irrational animals.

4. Man.

II.—The Providence which controuls and preserves the human family.

1. See it in nations and communities.

2. See it in individuals.

III.—Redemption.

IV.—The fulfilment of his designs in the atonement.

V.—In the preservation of his Church.

1. This subject should induce alarm.

2. It should promote humility.

3. It should inspire confidence.

London, 16th May, 1852.

SERMON XLIV.

CHRISTIAN ENDURANCE.

“Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”
2 TIMOTHY, ii. 3.

The trials of a Christian, especially of a Christian Minister.

I.—The hardness we are called to endure.

Our difficulties are divided into classes—enemies, temptations, and trials or hardness.

1. Poverty or secular embarrassment.
2. Sickness or depression.
3. Opposition.

II.—The advice of the Apostle.

1. He urges to endurance.
 - (1.) Because hardness is of Divine appointment.
 - (2.) It tends to promote holiness.
 - (3.) By it God may be glorified.
2. He presents a model—“As a good soldier.”
 - (1.) A soldier endures with loyalty.
 - (2.) He endures with bravery.
 - (3.) He endures expecting promotion.
 - (4.) In hope of his final reward.

London, 24th May, 1852.

H2

SERMON XLV.

THE GAINFUL TENDENCY OF GODLINESS.

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.”—1 TIM. vi. 6.

These words open to our consideration two questions.

1. Godliness is accompanied with contentment.

2. Godliness with contentment is great gain.

I.—Godliness is accompanied with contentment.

1. Because it satisfies the soul with its chief good.

2. It leads us to an acquaintance with the purposes of Divine Providence.

3. It teaches us to place a proper estimate on earthly good.

4. It leads us to regard our blessings as the gift of God.

II.—Godliness with contentment is great gain.

Contentment itself is an important part of that gain.

It is great gain :

1. Because it promotes in the believer decision of purpose.

2. It fortifies us with prudence.

3. It tends to promote to habits of industry.

4. Temporal gain is frequently the reward of righteousness.

APPLICATION.

Here you see a connection between spiritual and temporal affairs. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God,” &c.

INTRODUCTION.

Gain not always a consequence of virtue.

London, 8th June, 1850.

SERMON XLVI.

THE GLORIOUS PROSPECTS OF THE SONS
OF GOD.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God ; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.”—1 JOHN iii. 2, 3.

I.—A grateful acknowledgement of the present relation of believers. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” How worthy of gratitude is such a contemplation, when we view this adoption !

1. In its original cause—the love of God.
2. In the means by which it has been accomplished.
3. In the privileges it secures.

II.—The unspeakable glory of their future state. “It doth not yet appear what we shall be,” &c.

III.—Their blessed assurance. They know, that—

1. Christ shall appear.
2. That they shall be like him.
3. That they shall “see him as he is.”

IV.—The sanctifying tendency of their hope.

“And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.”

It has this tendency, because,

1. It leads him to contemplate the purity of God.
2. It makes him disregard the things of earth.

3. It reveals to him the necessity of holiness in view to usefulness here and happiness hereafter.

APPLICATION.

1. How cheering is the Christian's hope.
2. Solemnly consider the test of that hope.

INTRODUCTION.

Variety of gifts in the apostleship: Paul, Peter, James, John. John was contemplative. His theme was love.

London, 15th June, 1850.

SERMON XLVII.

BELIEVERS STIMULATED TO PERSEVERE IN WELL DOING.

“And let us not be weary in well doing ; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.”—GAL. vi. 9.

The text teaches us that—

1. Religion is the business of life.
2. It implies that we are liable to weariness in well doing.
3. It stimulates us to perseverance by an important exhortation.

I.—Religion is the business of life. It is not merely a state, but it is a practice. Pious feelings are communicated that pious actions may be promoted. It is a mistake on this point that has occasioned so much backsliding. If the service of God be not regarded as the great primary object of our being, we are likely to be influenced by indecision ; and that indecision is a sad omen of our speedy fall. That we may be saved from it, let us consider—

1. The duties we owe to ourselves. However humbling a view man may entertain of himself in a state of contrition, he is a being of value. The soul, though sinful, is immortal. The understanding, though contracted, is capable of the knowledge of God. Life is a state of preparation.

2. Consider the duties we owe to others. Our duty to them is fraternal, and we are called to invite Christ. This may be done by prayer, exhortation, and example. Life is but short enough for the performance of benevolent duties.

3. Consider the duties we owe to God. He is an Infinite Being; we are laid under infinite obligation. "None of us liveth to himself." These duties require obedience, faith. Here then is work for every hour. Long as we have a soul to save—long as others lie round us "in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity"—and long as we have a God to glorify, "let us not be weary in well-doing."

II.—We are liable to weariness "in well-doing."

1. This may arise from the difficulties connected with the performance of duty. The opposition of the world to Christianity is trying to every Christian mind. The temptations of the adversary.—These difficulties by the inconstancy of others.

2. From the length of the way. To the believer few thoughts are more elating, than the brevity of life. Life would ever be thus regarded if we consider it in contrast with eternity; but alas! we grow weary and faint in our minds, and say, "My Lord delayeth his coming."

3. This may arise from ignorance. Ignorance enervates the soul, and renders us almost insusceptible of those ennobling feelings of benevolence and zeal which adorn the Christian character. Well instructed Christians than mere enthusiasts.

4. This may arise from neglect of the means of grace. They cannot as means be too deeply appreciated. One of their most excellent tendencies is to enliven, encourage, and strengthen the drooping soul. This is specially true

of social worship. “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another daily; and so much the more as we see the day approaching.”

III.—Mark the important exhortation by which we are stimulated to perseverance: “Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

1. In this we have an instructive view of the wisdom of Divine providence.—The time of our reward is in due season. Our time is not yet come—God’s purposes are not yet fulfilled: let us endure to the end.

3. In this we have an encouraging consideration of our reward.—“We shall reap.” Blessed assurance! The seed is planted in good ground: no winter blast can destroy—no scorching sun shall wither it. God is just; he will “give unto us a crown of life.”

3. These words also contain a solemn condition: “if we faint not.” On this pends our safety. Past zeal and benevolence will entitle us to no reward, if we do not persevere. Nothing short of a life of holiness can entitle you to an eternity of bliss. “He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

APPLICATION.

1. We are called to action.
 2. We are required to persevere in well-doing.
 3. We are warned by the danger of spiritual indulgence.
 4. We are encouraged by the hope of eternal life.
- “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immove-

able, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

INTRODUCTION.

It is a sad proof of the moral degeneracy of man, that duties, once the most ennobling and pleasurable, are regarded with indifference and distaste, while other employments—grovelling and unimportant, absorb his thoughts. Intellectual culture, an exercise, which seems to glisten with its own excellencies and rewards, is a weariness to the flesh; and the student must be urged to application, by the stimulus of emulation or pride. Religious duties, once the most exalted pleasures of the immortal mind, have become a drudgery to carnal sloth. And it might be said to many, "What! could ye not watch one hour?" Hence warnings and exhortations are necessary for the church.

Our text is of this quickening spirit. God grant that it may graciously influence every heart this morning!

London, 19th June, 1850.

SERMON XLVIII.

THE CHRISTIAN'S WARFARE AND REWARD.

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”—REV. iii. 5.

God's peculiar regard for his church, illustrated by his counsels to the church of Sardis.

1. The Christian's warfare.

2. The Christian's reward.

I.—The Christian's warfare.

“He that overcometh.”

1. A warfare implies enemies.

(1.) Invisible spiritual agencies. “Spiritual wickedness in high places.”

(2.) The carnal mind. It is enmity against God. It is a foe.

[1.] Because of its sinfulness.

[2.] Because of our imperfections.

(3.) The opposition of the world to Christ.

(4.) “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

2. A warfare implies weapons of defence. See Paul's description of a Christian's armour, Eph. vi. 14–17.

Describe the different parts.

3. The Christian's warfare issues in a glorious conquest. Of this “what we know not now, we shall know hereafter.” The greatest glory of our victory is that it is through the

blood of Christ. "Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."

II.—The Christian's reward.

1. The same shall be clothed in white raiment. Colours among the ancients were emblems of quality. An olive branch was peace : white, domestic purity, happiness. This seems to be an allusion to the ceremony of a priest's expulsion.

2. "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." This alludes to another part of the ceremony of expulsion. Heaven is a state of infallibility.

3. "I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

1. Let the Christian be encouraged.

2. Remember the reward is only to him who is a final conqueror.

3. If you have not been united in Emanuel's army, come now!

London, 19th June, 1850.

SERMON XLIX.

THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS.

“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.”—2 TIM. i. 13.

1. An expressive designation of the Gospel.

2. An exhortation to steadfastness therein.

I.—An expressive designation of the Gospel.—“The form of sound words.” The pattern or model of Christian doctrine.

1. They are sound because of their truth.

2. Sound because of their importance.

3. Sound because of their permanent value.

4. They contain the elements of all spiritual truth.

II.—An exhortation to steadfastness therein.—“Hold fast, &c., in faith and love.”

1. In “faith.”

2. “In love, which is in Christ Jesus.”

INTRODUCTION.

The human mind desires novelty. This is inadmissible in the Gospel of Christ.

“Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

London, 20th June, 1850.

SERMON I.

CONVERSATION BECOMING THE GOSPEL.

“Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ.”

PHIL. i. 27.

1. The text implies the Gospel sustains a peculiar relation to every believer. 2. And on that relation is founded the exhortation: “Only let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel.”

I.—The Gospel sustains a peculiar relation to every believer.

1. It is his spiritual light.
2. It is his consolation.
3. It is his great directory.
4. It contains his assurance of heaven.

II.—“Only let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel.”

1. Be joyful.
2. Be serious.
3. Be zealous.
4. Let all your actions be performed in reference to eternity.

You are called to illustrate the principles of that religion which you profess.

London, 20th June, 1859.

SERMON LI.

THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT.

“Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”—2 Cor. ix. 15.

Gratitude is one of the noblest exercises of the human mind. The ancient patriarchs and prophets were influenced by it. It ushered in songs the advent of Christ. Paul urges it upon the benevolent Christians of Corinth.

1. The claims; 2. The nature; 3. The benefits of Christian gratitude.

I.—The claims of gratitude.

“The unspeakable gift.” This is Christ.

1. Unspeakable in the greatness of his character.
2. In the love in which he was given.
3. In the sufferings whereby he procured our ransom.
4. In the results of those sufferings.

II.—The nature of Christian gratitude.

1. It must arise from calm reflection.
2. It must be accompanied with a personal use of the blessings of the covenant of grace.
3. It must be accompanied with communication to others.

III.—The benefits of Christian gratitude.

1. It expands our conceptions of Divine things.
2. It strengthens faith.
3. It promotes humility.
4. It promotes zeal.

London, 20th June, 1850.

SERMON LII.

SELF-DEDICATION TO GOD.

“I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”—Rom. xii. 1.

Our text enforces self-dedication to God. We shall consider—

1. The nature; 2. The reasonableness; and 3. The considerations by which it is urged upon us.

I.—We claim your attention to the duty here enjoined.

The terms employed in this exhortation of the Apostle were remarkably appropriate to the Levitical prejudices of many of the Roman church. In his allusion to sacrifices, he seems to say, Why are ye so desirous to continue the abolished rites of a finished dispensation? Was there anything pleasing to the flesh in the severe duties it imposed upon you? Should you not rather rejoice, that the law having a shadow of good things to come, has been superseded by the bringing in of a better hope? But if, notwithstanding all my entreaties and arguments, you adhere in affection to these sacrificial offerings, then offer yourselves.

1. Present your bodies to God a living sacrifice. The body here expresses an unreserved dedication of all our energies

to his service. While in sin the members of these bodies are the agents of wickedness: after our espousal to Christ we become his property. "Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?" "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God:" Rom. vi. 12, 13. Believers are ordained priests unto God. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ:" 1. Pet. ii. 5. The sacrifice you are called to offer is not one of atonement, but of acknowledgment—as Noah, Gen. viii. 20. Jacob, on his way to Padanaram: and after his meeting Esau, he erected an altar and called it El-elohe-Israel. You are called to bring a living sacrifice.

2. Present your bodies "holy"—separated from the world, dead to sin.

3. Present them "acceptable to God." Their acceptability is through Christ. How encouraging.

II.—The reasonableness of this duty.

1. It is reasonable because of our many obligations to God.

2. It is reasonable because of its simplicity.

3. It is reasonable when viewed in contrast with Jewish and Heathen ceremonies.

4. It is reasonable because of the happiness resulting from it.

III.—The considerations by which it is urged upon us:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies"—or rather, the tender compassion—"of God." Mighty

theme! Where shall we begin to investigate its ample contents? There is here an evident allusion to the doctrinal truths discussed in the former part of the epistle.

1. By his impartial love to universal man.
2. By the blessings which flow from the atonement of Christ.
3. By your own experience of his grace.

Need I apply what has been said? These tender compassions, increased by the experience of another week, appeal to you to-day. Are you a believer?—dedicate yourself to God! Are you in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity?—feel thy obligations, and offer thy sacrifices to God in the presence of all his people.

INTRODUCTION.

The ultimate design of Christian doctrine is Christian practice. The Scriptures recognize this. Especially the writings of St. Paul. The character of the Roman church.

Yorkville, 6th July, 1850.

SERMON LIII.

THE LITTLE FLOCK OF CHRIST
ENCOURAGED.

“Fear not little flock ; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”—LUKE xii. 32.

Your prayerful attention is invited—

1. To the characters addressed ; 2. The ground of their consolation ; and 3. The encouragement given them.

I.—We shall consider the characters addressed. This is necessary to counteract the dangerous propensity of many, to apply to themselves indiscriminately the precious promises, which are yea and amen only to those who believe. The comfortable words of our text were addressed to the disciples of Christ, and through them are transmitted to his church in every age of the world.

1. Our Lord here designates his church a “flock.” This figurative expression implies many characteristics of the people of God which we cannot now consider. Overlooking these, we would direct your contemplation to one important feature which it indicates : and that is, the unity of the church. The primitive disciples of our Saviour were of “one heart and soul.” No doubt this unity derived much of its familiar affection from the circumstances in which they were placed. Derision, persecution,

and imprisonment were the lot of all; and each was led to sympathize in the other's sorrows. Their unity may also have been strengthened by frequent association. Zion did not in their age extend her borders over the vast territories she now occupies; and her smaller fields of labour were more congenial to the occasional and personal intercourse of the apostles. Thus, though separated from the world by the requirements of holiness, they learned to delight in each other's society; and to love each other as brethren. But their unity, my brethren, originated in a nobler source than sympathy or communion. They were united to Christ as their living Head, and to their brethren as members of one body. And this connection arose neither from a selfish nor a social principle, but from a spirit of holy love. They had passed from death unto life. They loved the brethren. The doctrines expressed by them they had learned and believed. Nor was their faith the blind deference of one to the opinion of another. Each examined for himself; and each bore his cross on the genuine strength of his own convictions. Thus you see their unity was rather in feeling than in sentiment. Such a unity still exists in the true church of Christ. Christ is still the shepherd of his sheep; and they hear his voice and they know and follow him. Since the days of the primitive church, differences of opinion may have created prejudice; and that prejudice may have prevented the familiar intercourse between the different branches of Zion, which the early disciples enjoyed. But wherever godliness is to be found, the church will ever be a flock; one in zeal, one in love, one in every good word and work.

2. We further observe, our Lord regards his church as a "*little flock*." What an humbling consideration is this! That a body, called by the name of Christ, seeking happi-

ness where alone it could be found, and aspiring to a noble state of existence, should be imitated by so few, and derided by so many. The church is a little flock—

(1.) Compared with our expectations respecting it. Viewing God as a being of infinite power and compassion—tenderly regarding man, and employing the most effectual means for his rescue from death—as the controller and director of the human will, one might expect him to exert a compulsory power over the human soul, and thus, gather the world into his fold. But grace, though influential and persuasive, is not compulsory. The Spirit of God works *in* and not *over* the human will: and man is left to “choose whom he will serve.” But oh, the influence of sin on such a choice! “Light is come into the world; but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.” Hence the church is a little few, while sinners are a mighty multitude. From the glorious predictions with which the Messiah had been foretold, we would suppose nations in universal suspense would have awaited his coming, ready to hear the first lessons of his grace, to embrace the conditions of salvation and bow in adoration at his feet. But it was not so. The Deity enshrined in human flesh did not so speedily break the spell of carnal darkness; and multitudes remained in impenitence and unbelief. So that of his little group of followers it might be asked, “What are these among so many?” The earthly ideas of men concerning the Son of God were disappointed; and he was derided as an impostor.

If we survey the sublimities of Christian doctrine and the blessed effects produced on those who embrace them, well may we wonder that they should be so commonly rejected. But consider, these doctrines are too humbling to the selfish pride of humanity. They unfold too hon-

estly the blackness of the human heart. "And men come not to the light lest their deeds should be reproved." The self-denial imposed upon the followers of these doctrines are too ungrateful to the luxurious taste of the carnal mind. That taste must be spiritualized before it can delight in spiritual things. Be not surprised then that Israel is a "*little flock*."

(2.) The church is a "little flock," compared with the human family. Behold the vast continent of Europe, where the most signal triumphs of Christianity have been achieved! There the champions of by-gone centuries have wielded the swords of truth and error in defence of true and false doctrines. There the foundation of Reformed Christianity was laid; and there, seminaries combining human sciences with religious knowledge have been erected. And yet how few the number of the saved! O Europe, thy sacred institutions—thy mighty theologians, rise to condemn thy spiritual sterility. Asia with its teeming millions presents to the eye of true philosophy a dismal aspect. There the seeds of patriarchal piety were sown; and to-day it is one vast moral wilderness. There Jehovah in former dispensations appeared in terrible and glorious majesty to his servants: now on its once favoured plains might be written Ichabod—the glory is departed. There the Divine victim of Calvary expired in agony and was buried in shame: yet few of the results of that great atonement are seen. And little but the crumbling monuments of the East remind us that there he lived and there he died. From that land issued the first rays of Gospel light; and while they have shed their healing beams on distant climes, she lies mantled in the darkness of idolatry. And notwithstanding the victories of missionary enterprise, how vast the dominion of the man of sin—how few the

kingdoms of our God and his Christ. What Christian soul weeps not for the miseries of Africa? The sable complexion of her sons, is but an emblem of the darkness that covers her land, and the gross darkness that enshrouds the minds of her people. Here and there the gloomy expanse is bespangled with an infant church; but misery and ignorance prevail. Look at America, that land which has long basked beneath the rays of European theology, imparting educational and religious strength from parent institutions. And with all her world-surprising progress how small is the genuine church of Christ; and alas, how mighty the multitude that run to do evil!

(3.) And this is but a superficial contrast. Compare the nominal with the genuine church of Christ, and say, is not the latter a "little flock?" "They are not all Israel, that are of Israel." Far be it from me to depreciate the indirect influences of Christianity in the moral restraints and virtuous principles which it promotes. But let it be remembered, that till the heart is renewed in righteousness, the sacrifice of Christ has not accomplished its design—the Gospel has not fulfilled its commission. In hastily reading a census of the church, we are encouraged to see the great accessions it received. But when we deduct from these mighty numbers the truly regenerate and godly-living, how lamentably small is the remainder. "Wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat. Because strait is the gate and narrow the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." A little band of despised pilgrims we pass through vast multitudes of transgressors till we reach our Father's home. But though few, we are not left to our native strength. "The Lord of Hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge." We are now led to the second feature of our subject:—

II.—The ground of our consolation.—“It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom:” that is, the kingdom of glory. The blessings of the Gospel flow to the believer from two principles—the one of justice, the other of love. The Atonement of Christ has made it obligatory on Divine justice to save man when he complies with the conditions of salvation. This is an encouraging doctrine: but it is far more consolatory to know that our blessings are communicated in love—that the kingdom or final reward of every true believer is the benevolent intention, the “good pleasure” of the Father. That kingdom is not presented to you merely because Justice has been satisfied by the offering of Christ; but also because the Father hath loved you, and set his heart upon you to magnify you. “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

1. His good pleasure to give you the kingdom is manifested in the gift of Christ. Jesus was not only offered to, but given by the Father. “God so loved the world, that *he gave* his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish but have everlasting life.” The Father provided the burnt offering by which his own wrath was to be appeased. Consider, my brethren, the greatness of that gift. “He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him.” “The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.” Consider the design of that gift. It was not merely to rescue you from eternal condemnation; but to raise you to everlasting life. While you view the heights and depths of that infinite love displayed in your redemption, can you doubt his “good pleasure to give you the kingdom?” “He that spared

not his own son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things."

2. The "Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" is displayed in the means of grace appointed for your advancement in holiness. It is evidently the design of every sacred ordinance to make you meet for the saints in light. I admit that many, if not all of these means, have a secondary use, with regard to the circumstances of your present state; but that you may attain the kingdom is the grand ultimate of all.

(1.) Does God inculcate the duty of prayer? It is that your hearts may be humbled; your souls sanctified; your salvation completed; and that you may be thereby fitted to reign in his presence. All prayer might be called a reiteration of our Lord's supplication: "Father, I will that where I am, there they may be also."

(2.) Does he command you to search the Scriptures? And what are they? A revelation of the Divine will, to elevate your ideas of God, to mould your feelings by religious education, and to prepare you for honour and usefulness in the world? Nay, my brethren, this is but a small part of the design of the sacred volume. It is rather a chart to steer you through this ocean of sorrow, to yon haven of eternal rest. Its doctrines refer to heaven; its warnings refer to heaven; and its promises point to heaven. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."

(3.) Does he institute the ordinances of the Sanctuary; and enforce your attendance there? It is another proof of his good pleasure to give you the kingdom. These hallowed services of his temple have many sacred influences and gracious tendencies upon your present state and relations; but their ultimate tendency is to lead, through

these outer-courts of worship, to the Holy of Holies in the New Jerusalem; and separate from this tendency, they lose all their earthly benefits. The services of the church below are emblems of the duties of the church above. And may we not regard the connection of the one with the other, as a pledge of our eternal inheritance? "They sing the Lamb in hymns above and we in hymns below." We bow in praise and supplication at the mercy seat: they cast their crowns in ceaseless adoration before the majesty of "Him that sitteth upon the throne." We read his will in his inspired oracles: they hear that will as it emanates from his lips. The ultimate of the Gospel of Christ is stated by the Apostle when he says, "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

(4.) Does he spread before you fields of usefulness, and say, "Go work in my vineyard?" The design of this duty, as it relates to yourselves and the fruit of your labour, is eternal salvation. Religious activity is essential to the maturity of your Christian graces. While watering others, yourselves will be watered. And for your encouragement he assures you, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The trophies of grace, won through your instrumentality, are designed to add to your everlasting bliss.

(5.) Your very afflictions are a testimony of his good pleasure to give you the kingdom. True, they are the agents of much spiritual good to the believer on earth—they humble pride, they purify your graces from the dross of sin: but they do more than this—they "work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Thus do all the means of grace evince the love of the Father, and assure us of his saving purposes.

3. The long suffering of God proclaims his “good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Let me here appeal to the experience of the believer. How grievous have been your short comings before God, even since your adoption into the family of Christ. Review your neglect of prayer—your coldness; your indolence; your inconsistencies; and your frequent waywardness, and say, “It is of the Lord’s mercy that we are not consumed.” Might he not even in justice, notwithstanding the efficacious merits of Christ, have cut you down as cumberers of the ground? But he has not. The barren fig-tree is still spared. Jesus intercedes—his cry prevails—and you are yet within the reach of mercy. And why this tenderness? Say not that is merely for his own glory; for the glory of his justice could be manifested in your destruction as easily as the glory of mercy in your salvation. No: it is because he is “long suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

4. The Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom is declared in his precious promises. These promises are annexed to duties prescribed in reference to our eternal state; and the heavenly joy of the believer is their burden. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne.” Such promises as these, my brethren, are not the mere permissions of justice. Their very style proves them to be the effusions of a heart of infinite love, earnestly disposed to “give you the kingdom.”

5. His “good pleasure to give you the kingdom” is

also seen in the exalted state of grace to which believers are raised on earth. Brilliancy and rectitude of mind in youth, forbode prosperity and future greatness in the world. Contemplate the nature and state of Adam in Paradise, and you must immediately infer that he was destined for a higher state of being. The material beauties of that happy garden might have answered him for a season; but they would soon have passed away. The communications of the Divine glory and presence which he realized might have satisfied his spiritual faculties for a time; but he aspired to a more consummate manifestation of that glory in heaven. His desire for such a privilege and his capacity for such a state, plainly show that God designed, after a season, to transplant him to the nobler Paradise above. You are placed under another covenant, the covenant of grace. The state of entire holiness and conformity to the Divine nature to which you may be raised here, fits you for higher privileges and far more exalted duties than the church militant opens before you. Yes: those sacred faculties and those immortal appetites, created in you by the operations of the renewing spirit, were never designed merely to pine in the vale of sorrow; or move merely in this earthly sphere too contracted for their mighty range. They must indeed be employed in many solemn and responsible exercises here; but earth is only a state of preparation for the skies. "Your life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Thus, my brethren, what God has wrought in you by his grace is a pledge, a bright assurance, of the glorious crown which he hath prepared for all who love his appearing. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." He who hath counted you worthy of this sacred calling, will

fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.

III.—Hear then, in the third place, the cheering encouragement of your Lord: “*Fear not*, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” This cheering, well grounded assurance should hush in silence every gloomy apprehension, and inspire you with a constant living faith.

1. Fear not the temptations of the adversary. He often beclouds thy joy, he need not molest thy peace. Your peace is your Saviour’s legacy. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you: Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” True, Satan is deceitful, but your God is omniscient; he is diligent, but your Saviour “ever liveth to make intercession for you.” “We are not ignorant of his devices.” But we hear a voice overwhelming in consolation all his subtilities: “Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God.”

2. Fear not the opposition of the world. Had we no spiritual perception, it would indeed be a terrible consideration, that mankind are arrayed in arms against us. The ruler uses his power—the man of respectability his influence—the man of wealth his riches—and the scholar his learning, to dethrone our King, and to demolish our beloved Christianity. But we have an eye of faith, beholding the fulness of sustaining grace and power which dwells in Christ. We have an ear of faith, and it hears his precious promises. “My grace is sufficient for thee.” “If God be for us, who can be against us?” “Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.”

3. Fear not because of the fewness of your number. Were the church left to hope for prosperity and safety

from external circumstances, how dark and fearful would be her prospects. How can *we* a little band, humble and despised, overcome the prejudices of men—break the massive gates of their carnal prison—and spread the light of Gospel truth? Or how can we permanently exist? The persecutions and contaminations of an ungodly generation, will certainly weaken our little flock. Away with such gloomy forebodings. “Fear not!” “God is in the midst of us: he shall help us, and that right early.” “Trust in the Lord Jehovah; for in him is everlasting strength.”

4. Fear not your temporal afflictions. You may have bereavements, and worldly disappointments, and losses, and cares. They may come in as a flood and threaten your destruction. Fear not, all things shall work together for good to them that love God.

5. Fear not heaviness through manifold temptations. Spiritual melancholy is occasioned by various causes. Sometimes by bodily infirmity; and often by complications of sorrow. This dark feeling is at times the lot of the most devoted and cheerful saint. But you are called to rise above it. “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servants, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God.” “Ye now have sorrow for a season, but he will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you.” Had you no other promise for your encouragement than that of our text—“It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom”—even this would reach to all your necessities; fathom your deepest rivers; and always shed its sacred beams on your afflicted path. “Thou wilt guide me by thy council; and afterwards receive me to glory.”

APPLICATION.

1. If you are of the little flock, gladly do I address to you the consolatory words of the text. Take them. Apply them to your all-sufficient solace—to your various afflictions and trials. “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” O all-comprising promise ! It cheers us in all our gloom, and directs us to the land that is very far off. You have seen the displays of this “good pleasure” in the natural world. “Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse or barn; and God feedeth them. How much more are ye better than the fowls.” “Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” Listen then to your Saviour’s appeal: “If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” See the moral world to which you belong: his good pleasure is the same in its nature—the same in its benevolent designs—though it operates in a different manner. Then have faith in God. Let all your expectations of present grace and future glory be founded on this rock—“It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

2. But some of you are not of the “little flock.” You have no claim upon the consolations of the gospel. Deceive not yourselves, my brethren. When we hear of the prospects of the saints, and the glory which God hath reserved for those that love him, there is danger of our cherishing some vague passing extacy, without calm examination. Are ye renewed in the spirit of your minds? Have ye put on the new man, which after God is created

in righteousness and true holiness? If not, ye have neither part nor lot in the matter. This moment, awake from thy slumbers, and seek the salvation of God! "Come thou with us"—the "little flock"—"and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

INTRODUCTION.

A careful perusal of the history of our blessed Lord, will discover a striking difference between his address to the multitude, and to his disciples. To the former he taught as one having authority; to the latter, he maintained that authority with more social affection. To the former, he spake as a sacred philosopher; to the latter he condescended as a benign parent. To sinners, he unfolded the terrors of his judgment in all their naked grandeur. But to his followers, he addressed these astounding doctrines, with assurances of love and promises of providential care. The first paragraph of this chapter contains a tender admonition to his disciples. At the thirteenth verse, he was interrupted by one of the company, who said unto him, "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." This he repelled, not only by his reply, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over thee?"—but by the solemn parables of the covetous rich man, whose earthly hopes were disappointed by the awful *veto* of Heaven, "this night thy soul shall be required of thee." In the twenty-second verse, our Saviour resumes his discourse to the disciples; and gliding from the solemnity of the narrative first uttered, he cheers his children by an encouraging view of his gracious providence; and closes with the passage before us:—"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Yorkville, 13th July, 1850.

SERMON LIV.

DAVID'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GOD.

“As for God, his way is perfect : the word of the Lord is tried : he is a buckler to all those that put their trust in him.”—2 SAMUEL xxii. 31.

Three things are stated in the text :—

The perfection of God's way ;

The trial of his word ; and

The defence of his people.

I. “As for God, his way is perfect.” The way of God signifies his work—his manner or plan of accomplishing his purposes. In this state of partial knowledge, we can only contemplate his way as it pertains to ourselves, and earthly circumstances. The development of his unveiled glory, and his sacred revelations to an unseen world, too far transcend our limited conceptions. There is indeed much mystery enshrouding many of his purposes relating to man ; but the view of Divine perfection and benevolence therein revealed, so far as we can penetrate, is full of instruction and encouragement.

1. “The way of God is perfect,” in the works of nature.

(1.) Survey the expansive firmament : and whether viewed by the unassisted eye of sense, or minutely examined by the criticisms of science, the perfection of

Jehovah will be written there. Mark the order observed in the positions and revolutions of every planet, and the adaptation of their numberless changes to the varied circumstances of man; and say what attributes but the infinite wisdom and power of God could have called them into existence. The sun shines by day; the moon and stars irradiate our earth in his absence. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work.*" But the astronomer tells us of many terrific appearances of irregular comets, supposed to be the shattered remnants of once existing worlds, which evince at least some confusion, if not imperfection. Admit it, though it be only an opinion. The disorder of the moral universe, and the vengeance of Heaven consequently inflicted on his rebellious subjects, would reasonably be expected to produce such changes and commotions in the planetary system. Our position remains unmoved; "the way of God is perfect."

(2.) Look you to the earth which we inhabit, and say, does it not reveal the Deity? Behold the abounding trees, and plants, and herbs, provided for our necessities; and the vegetative powers by which they are produced; and consider, that since the third day of creation, not a single species of the vegetable kingdom has been lost. O Lord, in wisdom hast thou made—in benevolence hast thou preserved them all! But "why," asks the geologist, "are some soils barren, while others are luxuriant? And what mean these poisonous herbs?" Again we answer, these apparent deficiencies cannot be attributed to imperfection in God. No wonder the natural world should sympathize in the cruel degradation of him whom once she fed, and cheered, and clothed. Behold the irrational creation. From the mighty elephant to the smallest animacule, the

perfection of God appears. The inhabitants of earth, and air, and sea, all wait on him; and he gives them meat in due season. Here too disorder appears. Ferocious monsters vent their hatred of each other and of man, tell the sad story of man's depravity. But still the way of God is perfect.

(3.) Do you contemplate man? Here the perfection of Deity is grandly exhibited. As he came from his Maker's hand, he was the image of God. As he is now, he is under the curse of the law, degraded and sinful. That mind, once capacious, is contracted by ignorance. The soul, once glowing with moral purity, is now buried in "the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity." Had we no Bible, the present state of man would remain unaccounted for; and unenlightened reason might question the perfection of its God. But from the sacred page we learn that these defects in man are but monuments of Divine displeasure against sin. And then our conclusion establishes the perfection of his way; for to punish transgression with pain, disease, or natural death, is the perfection of justice.

2. "As for God, his way is perfect" in his moral government. That God exercises a special controul over his moral subjects, cannot be doubted by the most superficial observer, who can trace misery to its cause—vice; and happiness to its parent—virtue. Such marks of his aversion to sin, and his pleasure in uprightness abound in the history of nations and individuals. Sometimes however, for wise though mysterious purposes, God does not immediately pursue vice with judgment, nor virtue with its due reward. Thus the antediluvian world were permitted to persevere in transgression for an hundred and twenty years, before "the flood came and swept them all away." Thus the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah were not

immediately destroyed ; but after a series of exhortations and warnings from God, their perverseness provoked him to anger, and in his wrath he consumed them. Job was long left tossing in the billows of affliction ; but finally the anchor of relief came, and his last state was better than the first. Likewise the church in past ages was left to groan under the rod of the oppressor for many years ; her members were persecuted, imprisoned and martyred at the stake ; the armies of Baal appeared for a time to triumph : but soon the terrible storm subsided, the enemies of Zion were vanquished, and Jerusalem became " a quiet habitation." Thus it is often with ourselves : clouds and darkness are frequently round about many of his providences towards us. We are perplexed for a season, while scoffers ask, " Where now is thy God ?" We see the " wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree ;" and we are almost ready to murmur. But wait patiently for the Lord, your deliverance will soon come. And in your present afflictions you will one day adore the wisdom and compassion of your infinite Saviour.

" His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour ;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

And every gradual development of his designs will convince you more impressively of the perfection of his way. Think not then, sinner, to escape, if you continue in unbelief. Vengeance, though long delayed, will soon appear ! Fear not, O true believer ! Dark and perplexed may be thy path ; but follow the leadings of Providence, and the light of life will soon shine upon you.

3. " As for God, his way is perfect," in the scheme of redemption. A question more momentous was never pro-

posed by the compassion to the justice of God than this,—“How shall man be redeemed?” Angels in heaven, or devils in hell might have waited its solution in trembling suspense. The Divine threat has been issued:—“In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” It cannot be recalled. Infinite justice and the purity of his moral government are at stake. Man must be lost or a remedy provided. But where shall that remedy be found? Bring the blood of bulls and of goats to the altar of God, and seek to propitiate the Divine anger. It is in vain. They cannot take away sin.

“Rivers of oil, and seas of blood,
Alas, they all must flow in vain.”

You promise repentance. Endeavour in vain. The debt of violated law demands satisfaction. If you offer a human sacrifice, it must be rejected. It could not make atonement for the individual offered, much less for the whole progeny of man. What shall we do? Angels, assist us by your wise counsels, and save us from impending wrath! They cannot. The mighty problem baffles the ingenuity of all created intelligence. But hark! The offended God undertakes our cause. One attribute contends with another, till Mercy triumphs over Justice. The union of God with man is proposed. The Father sends the Saviour. The Son joyfully assents. “Lo I come to do thy will, O God!” Then comes the glorious promise to our guilty race. “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” Here is the perfection of God’s way.

“Thy debt’s discharged,
Thy ransom’s paid,
Thou mayest be justified.”

4. "As for God, his way is perfect" in the mode of extending the Gospel. In order to the effectual, universal spread of evangelical truth, the doctrines proclaimed, and the manner of their propagation, must differ in nature from human systems. A great work is here to be done. Obstructions and future difficulties lie before us. But the perfection of Jehovah has provided for all these evils. Knowing that men demand clear evidence of the Divinity of the gospel, he accompanies it with miracles, signs and wonders. And these exhibitions of supreme power were adapted to the spirit and circumstances of every age of the church. Ministers are sent forth—institutions are established for the extension of gospel light; and to-day the past history of the church, and the present blooming aspect of her wide-spread harvest, attest the fulfilment of the Divine promise :—"Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Human sciences and moral institutions have been patronized by the authority and wealth of the earth, and no wonder they have prospered. But here is a system revealing the innate depravity of man, and thus dispising the esteem of men; and yet it has over-run the mightiest nations, and having surmounted all opposition, it looks with majestic contempt upon its dethroned rivals, and defies the hostility of earth and hell. How do you account for this ? Let our text answer :—"As for God, his way is perfect."

5. Again, we observe, the perfection of the Divine way is declared in the present and eternal salvation of his people. We have just led your minds to a general view of the universal spread of the gospel. But to be more specific, let us contemplate the universal operations of grace in the hearts of believers. The first of these is conviction. Now, is it not remarkable that the Spirit of God, operating in the

same manner upon different constitutions of mind, should produce the same results? And it is the more striking, because the Spirit of God does not change the natural bias or various dispositions of the hearts upon which he exerts his influence. Yet the same contrite pangs throb in the breast of every awakened penitent. The pardon of sin, and the accompanying grace which renews the soul, produce the same peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and effects the same new creation wherever it is experienced. The promises of his truth, and the consolations of his grace, are adapted to every afflicted believer. They all speak with the same voice, and are heard with the same filial joy. The hope of glory kindles a brighter flame of love in the heart of the dying; and his language is, "I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." God works in him "exceedingly, abundantly, above all he can ask or think." At last the weary pilgrim is safely landed in the Canaan of promise. O what a glorious process of grace is this! purifying the soul from all sin—cheering the gloom of despondency in troubles—implanting a clear prospect of glory in the breast, and finally admitting the ransomed spirit to be for ever with its Lord. Sinner, I cannot lead you to glorify the perfection of God's way in this work of grace; but I will appeal to the experimental Christian—What think you of Christ? What is your testimony to the renewing power of holiness? Have you experienced his power to save? I am persuaded you would respond, "Yes." And cherubims would swell their united Hozannas of praise with your response: "as for God, his way is perfect."

II. The next statement of our text is "The word of the Lord is tried." His word is a revelation of his character, and an expression of his will. The sublime contents of the

inspired volume commend themselves to every intelligent, much more to every sanctified mind. But we are not left to presume its sacred authority merely from its nature. It is a "tried" word; and its trial is a proof of its truth, divinity and excellence.

1. "The word of the Lord is tried," by time. If antiquity can give authority to a system, and inspire mankind with a veneration for its principles, Christianity has eminent claims upon the faith of the world. The Bible is an old book. I grant that the long existence of an institution is not always a proof of its Divine authority. Sin is nearly coeval with the beginning of the world; and many of the most corrupt principles have exerted their baleful influence for ages. But the antiquity of the Scriptures forcibly proves their divinity; for no book has existed so long under the same circumstances. The writings of ancient philosophers and poets have been applauded by the learned and honourable of their age—they have flourished in public and private libraries—yet many of them to-day are as silent as the mouldering ashes of their authors. But here is a book, containing no allurements to the pride and fancy of men, committed to the trust of the Israelitish tribes, a wandering and changing nation, and yet it has lost none of its original truth. After numerous transmissions from generation to generation, it stands immovable as its God; and to it, in a lower sense, words once applied to him may be applied: "They all shall wax old as doth a garment; but thou art the same, and thy years fail not."

2. "The word of the Lord is tried," by opposition. Divine truth owes not its standing in the world to any human assistance. It has ever been waging war with motley enemies. The profane sons of vice, fearful of the

anethemas it denounces against them, ridicule and despise its warning voice; but still it cries aloud and spares not:—"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Infidelity has wielded her specious objections and cunning arguments against the truth of God; but that truth has baffled her subtilties in every attack, and now beholds her almost retired in blushing silence. Others have interwoven the superstitions of paganism, and the absurdities of human tradition with the doctrines of the Gospel; but this word, bursting from all these chains which would trammel her authority, pursues her Heaven-commissioned course. The defenders of this word have been persecuted and slain for its sake; but its precious promises have irradiated their dungeons, and established them more and more in the faith. The hypocrisy of the professing church, not less than other causes, has hindered the Gospel; but it has not, and never shall, destroy it. And should the essence of piety be quenched in cold formality and nominal religion, the purity of this unadulterated word would rise to condemn the dissembling sinner; just as the moon, though sometimes nearly hidden by passing clouds, soon reveals her light again; so this lamp of life, though at seasons bedimmed by opposition, shall break through all, and spread its hallowed beams upon our fallen world. "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my word shall not pass away."

3. "The word of the Lord is tried," by the fulfilment of its promises. Observe the predictions of the Old Testament: and though you cannot always discover their immediate accomplishment, by carefully tracing them, you will gradually behold them realized. Christ was promised to Adam, to the patriarchs, to Israel, and the prophets. We follow this promise, varying in language, and the sublime

emblems in which it was expressed, through many ages and dispensations. In the time, many events incurring the Divine displeasure take place; and crimes, if he were not God, would have led him to retract his engagements. But after the lapse of four thousand years, Christ appears—the pledge of Heaven is verified. Blessings were promised, or curses threatened to the Church of Israel, on certain conditions, and never did they fail. In the New Testament, other predictions may be found. One of these related to the destruction of Jerusalem. In allusion to the temple, the Son of Man declared, “One stone shall not be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.” And that the calamitous event occurred in literal consonance with the phraseology, is evident, from the impartial account of heathen historians. But there is another class of promises, which more strikingly illustrates this position of our text: that is, the promises made to the people of God. Here your experience will lend her aid to our argument, and proclaim, “The word of the Lord is tried.” To the penitent, the Gospel says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Lives there a man who ever complied with the condition, and did not realise the promise? Ye are told to “ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” Tell me, did you ever prove that promise vain? You are told “the Lord God is a sun and a shield: he will give grace and glory; and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” When you availed yourself of this promise, were you ever sent empty away? No, your Lord was not “slack concerning his promise.” But time would fail me to enter into the list of promises, threatenings, and assurances, which God has fulfilled. Seraphs in the church triumphant, saints in the church militant, and ghastly fiends in the torments of

the damned, would rise to corroborate the song of David, "The word of the Lord is tried."

4. "The word of the Lord is tried," in the salvation of sinners. That the main design of the Gospel is the salvation of souls, appears not only from its character, spirit, and tendency, but also from its gracious results. We do not lead you, my brethren, to contemplate and admire a mere system of well-organized principles, nor to applaud only the adaptation of the Gospel to the mental constitution of man—we have a more decisive evidence of its power, and that is, the good it has effected. Apart from the instructive and moral benefits with which it has ever adorned its recipients, look at the spiritual victories it has won. Be the Gospel true or not, it certainly must be confessed, that it has accomplished no unimportant changes in society. By it, ignorance has been dispelled, new feelings have been promoted, and a reformation of practice over cases which baffled the power of other institutions. In our own land, we see these things ; sinners have been converted to God, and hundreds have been added yearly to the church. In foreign lands, it is the same. Well may we take up the triumphant language of the Apostle, and say, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

5. "The word of the Lord is tried" by the experience of believers. For ages the church has walked to Zion by the light of the lamp of truth, and still she adheres to it as her infallible guide. The press has issued its volumes of invaluable instruction, and the tone of piety has been thereby elevated; but no book of human authority has superseded the lively oracles of God. When buffeted by the world, the flesh, and the devil, here is your invulnerable refuge. When groaning under the severities of bereave-

ments and temporal losses, here is your balmy aid. When hungering and thirsting after righteousness, here are the ever-during beacons, which point you to the fulness of sanctifying grace. When walking through "the valley of the shadow of death, here is the staff of your support; and here the light which shines upon your dreary path. If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, you can heartily respond to the sentiment of the Psalmist, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

III. We must hasten to the the third position of the doxology, "He is a buckler to all them that trust in him." This allusion to a weapon of defence, supposes that we have enemies. The remaining evils of our nature, the spiritual influence of the powers of darkness, and the hostility of mankind to the things of God, are each arrayed in terror against us. In the world we have tribulation. "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

2. But God is our defence. "He is a buckler to all them that put their trust in him." The buckler, in the armour of Oriental warriors, was synonymous with the shield or clypeas. It was buckled to the left arm, and then wielded so as to protect the whole body. Paul speaks of "the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." "The Lord God is a sun and shield; he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Defended by his almighty and victorious grace, "we are more than conquerors through him that hath loved us."

“This promise is to be realised by trusting in him. There is the grace of faith, and the act of faith. The former is absolutely the gift of God; by it he shields us from all our foes. The latter is exercised by ourselves; and it is to this act our text refers. This is “the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” Without such a trust, religion could supply no solid, no abiding peace. The Christian’s fortress lies behind the veiled spiritual world; and nothing can behold it but that faith which is “the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen.” This is the faith which gives a consoling impetus to the promise of Jehovah. “The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.”

PERORATION.

In conclusion, let me briefly apply what has been said. You have heard of the perfection of God’s way. You are convinced of it. Perhaps you have often admired it. But this is not enough. Have you walked in that way? A contemplation of the perfections of Jehovah may elevate your thoughts and spiritualize your affections. But this is vain, unless it influence your daily walk with God. Let God’s way be your constant example. “For this is the way, walk ye in it.”

2. You have heard of the trial of God’s word. Perhaps you never doubted its authenticity; and the argument advanced this morning may have only established your confidence in its excellence. But let me ask you, has that word been tried in your conversion; and can you this day clasp it to your heart as the “perfect law of liberty?” If not, you have never fully proved it. O, my brethren, doubt not the fulness of grace, held forth in this blessed

Gospel. Others have tried it, and their ransomed spirits sing joyfully to the God of their salvation. You may try it, and try it now, and prove that it is "the power of God unto the salvation of every one that believeth."

3. You have heard that God is a "buckler to all that put their trust in him." If you are of the accepted children, rely upon the strong arm of your deliverer—he is mighty to save. If you are yet in unbelief, oh, bring thy soul to the cleansing laver of the atoning blood. Roll thy burden in humble faith upon the sacrifice of Christ; then shalt thou know the value of this promise; and thy inmost soul will exclaim, "Blessed are all those that trust in him." May God impress his truth upon every heart for Christ's sake!

EXORDIUM.

These words, and the chapter in connexion with them, form a sublime doxology of David to God, after a series of gracious deliverances from the hand of his enemies. It would appear that the Psalmist, having now arrived at a late period of life, indulges in a grateful retrospect of the mercies that had crowned his path. He saw in the perils of his complicated history, the treacherous usurpation of his son Absalom frustrated by a dreadful death; and his frequent escapes from the jealousy of the tyrant Saul, whose malice he survived. These, with the conquest of many heathen nations, and the eventual establishment of the throne he now occupied in peace, led him with joy to recount the tender mercies and providential care of God. The words of our text are not a burst of unmeaning enthusiasm: they are the sincere acknowledgments of a calmly contemplative mind. You may observe a beautiful dependence between each of these clauses. The perfection of

God's way recommending his word; and the trial of that word enforcing the promise of protection to his saints. The eulogiums passed upon some conquerors are fulsome and imaginary. Lest this should be suspected of David's doxology, we shall examine its parts carefully, and then submit the whole to your candid judgment.

Yorkville, 20th July, 1850.

SERMON LV.

PRACTICAL HOLINESS ESSENTIAL TO THE
PERFECT KNOWLEDGE OF
RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”—John iii. 17.

“If any man will do his will,” or, as the words may be translated, “If any man be willing to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” The doctrine of our text is,—*that practical holiness is essential to a perfect knowledge of religious truth.* In demonstrating this proposition, we shall 1st consider Christian practice, as strengthening all other arguments in favour of the doctrines of Christianity; and 2ndly, as furnishing a class of evidence peculiar to itself.

I.—In the first place we view practical holiness as strengthening all other arguments in support of Christianity. You are aware that some of the evidences of our holy religion appeal so powerfully to intellectual man, that candid reason cannot resist their force. And yet, even in these evidences, there is a beauty and power indescribable by any but the experimental Christian. Nor does this make Christianity assume a suspicious aspect, to say that none but the subjects of its influence can fully test its

truth and Divine excellence. For if it be objected that they are partial to the doctrines of their profession, we can retort, that unbelievers are partial to the ways of sin. In the study of any science, we must be predisposed for it by a natural taste; and our proficiency in learning will be proportionate to the influence of this peculiar bias. But as man in his natural state has no taste or inclination for the things of God, it follows that the soul, renewed in righteousness, when prepared by spiritual faculties and dispositions, must in its sacred researches far surpass the superficial knowledge of the merely intellectual Christian.

1. The existence, character, and attributes of God are displayed in the works of nature. They are stamped with incontrovertible evidence of his wise and benevolent designs. And were man unbiased by sin, the spontaneous acknowledgment of every rational mind would be, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." The natural world may be studied by man in three different ways. It may be regarded as the only revelation of the Divine will; or it may be regarded as a very imperfect revelation of that will; and yet the evidences which it does contain may not be sufficiently understood; or it may be regarded in its true character, as revealing much of the wisdom and power of Jehovah, and verifying the clear revelations of the inspired volume: and it may be contemplated with grateful admiration, so long as our opinions and feelings are held in

submission to the oracles of God. When nature is regarded as the only revelation of the Divine will, the errors of the speculative Deist are as numerous as they are dangerous. For while many of the beauties of creation are grand monuments of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, many other appearances in the natural world would seem to contradict these attributes; and if they are not explained, they must lead to the most absurd notions of the Deity. "Why," asks the Deist, "do I behold, in connection with the beauties of nature, many terrific and revolting scenes? What mean these rugged mountains, these broken cliffs, these barren wastes? Whence proceed these terrible storms, devastating countries and endangering the life of man? Such bewildering problems will ever arise to the mind of him, who studies the doctrines of Christ, unaided by the light of revelation. Led by the deceptive meteors of a vain imagination from one confused notion to another, till, lost in the intricate labyrinths of error, he will finally sink to Paganism, if not to Atheism itself. But there are others who profess all the doctrines of Christianity; and they regard the works of nature as a very imperfect revelation of the Divine will. They contemplate with profit and delight the expansive firmament above, and the verdant earth beneath. With scientific minuteness they examine the philosophy of the wonderful works of God, till they have obtained a summit of knowledge far transcending the conception of ordinary minds. Yet, while their philosophy fathoms the bowels of the earth, and rises to the glittering orbs of heaven, beaming on every step some new evidence of the Divine perfections; alas! how seldom is their knowledge applied to a spiritual use. In their scientific works, the name of God is scarcely ever mentioned; his power and wisdom are sel-

dom magnified. There is a barrier between God and the natural man; and though every creature lives and moves, and has its being in him, his infinity seems hid from the carnal conceptions of mortals. Thus far, but no farther, can unsanctified reason proceed. But hand the book of nature to the true believer, and it will speak a language unknown to others. From it he will extract a testimony to the wisdom and omnipotence of God, utterly undiscernable by the darkened hearts of the ungodly. The knowledge it cannot supply, he finds in the inspired oracles; and the light it does reflect upon sacred things, beautifully illustrates the doctrines of Divine truth. Human reason is not strained beyond its proper limits; but guided by the lamp of that living word, and submitting all his opinions to its authoritative dictates, he steers a pleasing and a well-defined course. Science and religion go hand in hand; and the constant acknowledgment of his adoring spirit is, "O Lord, in wisdom hast thou made them all."

2. The Providences of God display his moral government to man. To a mind disposed to ridicule, few subjects will afford more ample scope than Divine Providence. Its mysteriousness.—Did man delight in the knowledge of God, every circumstance in life would——History and personal experience conspire to disclose his benign——But how seldom is Providence studied aright. The sceptic despises it as superstition. A life is saved—it is a coincidence. The wants of man are regularly supplied—it is a mere accident. The arm of Jehovah is made bare—at an important juncture, armies are defeated—it is by chance. So obstinate is unbelief. With a little more reverence does the Christian scholar—But "the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." But the true believer discerns wisdom and love with perspicuity and gratitude.

His humble ascriptions of praise rise, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." Thus circumstances which pass, elicit his moderation and gratitude.

3. We further remark, the authenticity of Scripture is established by the fulfilment of prophecy. This evidence is too decisive to be questioned by the most critical. Alas, how has the study been misapplied! The believer traces the fulfilment of prophecy, not only in the history of the church, and the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom, but in his own experience.

4. The divinity of Christianity is proved by miracles. Mark with what different feelings these are regarded by the mere scholar and the believer. Sinners study truth to detect error: believers, to discover the will of God, and adore the manifestations of his love.

II.—But practical righteousness contains evidences of Christianity peculiar to itself.

1. To him the justice of God is strikingly displayed. Rather it is felt in his heart.

2. He realizes the love of God.

3. The fulfilment of the Divine purposes, to a great extent, depends on the practical holiness of believers.

(1.) Spread of the Gospel.

(2.) Personal experience. Well might an eminent divine remark, "Were I to define divinity, I should rather call it a divine life than a divine science.

The facts of Church history, Christian biography, and our own experience prove.

PERORATION.

1. How flimsy and invalid are all objections to Christianity!

2. How important it is that we do his will.

INTRODUCTION.

The evidences of Christianity are adapted to the sinfulness of the human heart, as well as the ignorance of the human mind. Illustrate.

Yorkville, 10th August, 1850.

SERMON LVI.

CHRIST THE STRENGTH OF THE BELIEVER.

“I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.”—Phil. iv. 13.

The text naturally unfolds to our minds two important principles in divinity.

1st. That Christ is the strength of the believer; and

2ndly, That through him he is enabled to do all things.

I.—Jesus Christ is God ; and being one with the Father, possessed with all the Divine attributes, we can easily ascertain that his power is infinite. It is out of the fulness of this power or strength, considered morally, that the believer “receives, and grace for grace.” The impartation of this power is here ascribed to Christ, because in his priestly character and by virtue of his sacrificial offering, our saving strength has been procured, and is constantly communicated. “For when we were without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly.” “As sin hath reigned in us unto death, even so does grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

1. Christ strengthens us by instruction. Ignorance is weakness : knowledge brings confidence, rejoices and encourages.

2. Christ strengthens his children by the power of renewing grace. Sin governs man. Mere instruction cannot subdue it. Dry bones. This new principle empowering every nerve, and circulating in every artery of the soul.

3. By the continued supplies of his Spirit, communicating strength from Christ to the soul.—Eph. iii. 16.

II.—Through him he is enabled to do all things.

1. He can believe.
2. He can attain the perfection of holiness.
3. He can endure trials. Not a mere animal passion.
4. He can perform duties. Moses—David—Isaiah—the Apostles.
5. He can conquer enemies.

PERORATION.

1. This subject furnishes an humbling yet profitable view of human weakness.
2. It urges upon us the duties assigned us.
3. It contains encouragement for all.

EXORDIUM.

Man's veneration for sacred things good, but abused. They are designed for practice. Paul's circumstances.

Yorkville, 24th August, 1850.

SERMON LVII.

THE CHRISTIAN RACE.

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us ; and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.”—HEB. xii. 1, 2.

The Christian's life is spiritual, and can be maintained only by spiritual sustenance. It is well described by the apostle, who says, “I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.—Gal. ii. 20. His conversation is in heaven ; and his knowledge, his joys and his hopes, refer to things invisible. Hence, while the unregenerate man endeavours to amuse the immortal part with gaudy fascinations of external scenes, the believer can draw aside the curtain which intercepts the sight of the spiritual world, and feast his enraptured vision on the vast contents of “life and immortality brought to light in Christ by the Gospel.” How mighty is the influence which the Christian exerts around him ! While he lives in despised obscurity, he is by example and affectionate counsels the cheerful companion of his fellow-travellers to Zion ; and by silent admonition he adds not a little aid to the destruction of sin, and the establishment of righteousness in the earth. Nor does his gracious influence

cease with this short period of life. Death may gather him to his fathers, and translate him to his God; but still his spirit lingers in affectionate visits to the heirs of salvation below, beckoning them to mansions in the sky, and stimulating them to zealous exertions in the Lord's vineyard.

When to this we add the hourly savour which they leave behind them, who will not exclaim, "The memory of the just is blessed." "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." In the chapter preceding the text, the apostle Paul had been describing faith, and illustrating it by the example of numerous ancient worthies, who "died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."—Heb. xi. 13. Taking one grand view of the assemblage of spirits before the throne, he rises with rapture on the pinions of an ever vigorous faith; then looking down upon the Hebrew church, he closes the doctrinal discussion of his epistle in the earnest exhortation of the text, "Wherefore, seeing, &c." The whole passage is an allegorical allusion to one of the ancient Grecian games. Heathen mythology informs us, that these exercises were instituted by Jupiter, after his victory over the Titans; or, as a more probable opinion, that they were first established by Hercules in honour of Jupiter Olympus, after a victory obtained over Augias. These games were of various kinds; and one, not the least important, was racing. In keeping with this figure, we shall direct your attention to the words of our text, by considering—

1. The race prescribed;
2. The cloud of witnesses; and
3. The influence they should exert upon us.

I.—Here we have a race set before us. On the festive occasions to which we have just alluded, a course was marked out by the director of the proceedings, and none were allowed to transgress its limits. In this passage the race represents the course which God has prescribed for the Christian while sojourning in this lower world. To the believer alone is life a race: he alone is qualified to run in the way of God's commandments. This is in striking accordance with the requirements strictly observed in the selection of candidates for the Olympic races. None were permitted to engage in them, or any other games, but persons of unexceptionable morals, and high reputation. And each candidate underwent a preparatory discipline before he was admissible to the sacred celebration. They were severely examined by three interrogatories: 1. Were they freemen? 2. Were they Grecians? 3. Were their characters free from all infamous and immoral stains? And their qualifications strictly depended upon a satisfactory answer to each of these interrogatories. A spiritual preparation is not less necessary to every unrenewed man, before he enters the lists of Christ's genuine church. The guilt of sin must be cancelled, the heart must be renewed in righteousness, and the soul emancipated from the bondage of sin. When this great change takes place, and not till then, we become candidates for heaven. The sacred course marked out by Jehovah is ever guarded by repentance and faith; and however the external government of the church, in the admission of nominal members within its pale, may violate this rule, the law remains the same. "He that entereth not in by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

—John x. 1. The “highway” of the Lord “shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there; but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there.”—Isaiah xxxv. 8. 9.

1. That life is a race, supposes our present existence to be a state of trial. We live in a state of preparation for immortality; and our final glory will be measured by our righteousness on earth. If there be no reality in the future state of existence, the unsatisfying nature of earthly things would lead to question the wisdom and goodness of God, in appointing to his creatures a sphere too contracted for the full exercise of the noble capacities imparted by himself. For however much may be done or enjoyed in this vale of tears, some spiritual principle within us ever tends to a more exalted kingdom. The inspired volume regards earth and earthly things in relation to man as transitory, and prefatory to another state of existence. Its doctrines pour contempt on the gaudy toys of sense, and stimulate us to holiness, by the presentation of a crown of life. Its frequent and faithful admonitions, remind us of the dangers to which we are exposed; and warn us to “take heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.” And its promises, fraught with glittering allusions to our celestial diadem, urge us onward by the inculcation of duty and the assurance of glory. “Arise, this is not thy resting place; for it is polluted.” “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

2. Life as a race, is of short duration.

3. Implies competition.—1 Cor. iv. 24, 26.

4. Continual reference to the prize.—Phil. iii. 13, 14.

II.—The “cloud of witnesses.”

“Cloud,”—Hebraism for a great number. Witnesses may be those who testified of Christ, or those who behold us.

1. They are the spirits of just men, made perfect.—Once like us—have finished their course—are conversant with our world—are interested in us by reason of benevolent relation—former acquaintance—daily accumulating.

2. Angels are there, who remained in their first purity—their knowledge of earthly things—interest in man—one of sympathy—benevolence—near to us.

3. Jesus is there—omnipotent—mediator of the new covenant—his interest and sympathy.

4. “God the judge of all,” is there.

If I might extend the application of this figure,—church militant—devils—your families—the world.

III.—The influence they should exert upon us.

1. “Let us lay aside every weight.”

2. “And the sin that doth so easily beset us.”

3. “Let us run with patience.”

4. “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.”

This subject addresses itself to—

1. The believer. Faith is the test of your state.

2. To the backslider.—“Ye did run well, who did hinder you?”

3. To the impenitent. You, too, run a race—broad Witnesses, Warn, Invite.

Yorkville, 31st August, 1850.

SERMON LVIII.

ACQUAINTANCE AND PEACE WITH GOD.

“Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee.”—JOB xxii. 21.

1. The grossly absurd ideas which we frequently entertain of the Divine nature and government, are a sad proof of the weakness of the human understanding, the consequence of our moral estrangement from God.

2. What man would have been, without the assistance of Divine revelation, may be estimated by what he is with it. For notwithstanding the effulgence of clear instruction which the inspired oracles reflect upon our minds concerning the things of God, how dim is our vision of his majestic glory; how confused are our notions of his all-pervading power; how childish our conceptions of his unerring though mysterious providence.

3. These absurdities may arise, either from the haughty assumptions of human reason, refusing submission to the dictates of heavenly wisdom, or from a negligence in the studies of sacred truth, and the principles of Jehovah's government.

To the latter cause may be attributed erroneous doctrines, propagated by many pious and devoted, though mistaken ministers, who so badly reconcile the affairs of

mankind with the justice and benignity of the Supreme Being; and insinuate opinions contradictory to some or all of his attributes.

4. Eliphaz, the Temanite, was probably one of this class. His sincerity and righteousness we do not question; but his ignorance and misconception of God's purposes in the sore afflictions of Job, we condemn. Unable to distinguish between afflictions of punishments, and afflictions of trial, he breaks forth with vehement severity in a strain of terror and admonition, better adapted to the obdurate conscience of the impenitent sinner, than to the refined and pious feelings of the venerable patriarch. And but for the powerful counteraction of indwelling grace, teaching him correctly the will of God, and cherishing resignation to his painful circumstances, such unreasonable words might have proved fatal to his peace and confidence.

5. Nevertheless the piety of Eliphaz should recommend to us his words in the text; which though inappropriate to an afflicted saint, are perfectly applicable as an evangelical message to every unconvinced and unconverted heart. Nor will they be found of little force to the believer, who can practically apply their doctrines to his attainment of higher degrees in holiness.

Your devout attention is invited to these words as containing an important exhortation enforced by a gracious promise.

I.—1. In the first place, we are exhorted to an acquaintance with God. These expressive words strikingly indicate communion with God; and that clear perception of his will and the power of his renewing grace, which he has presented to us in the Gospel as the common privilege of our redeemed race. Such an acquaintance Adam possessed, in the primitive

innocence and purity of his once happy Paradise. His relation to God was filial, and his intercourse with Deity was frequent and familiar. When he by transgression fell, the reciprocal union of God and man ceased. Nor was it restored till Christ by his propitiatory sacrifice, reconnected the disjointed footstool of earth with the throne of God; and opened "a new and living way" to the "holy of holies" by the merits of his own priesthood.

In this hallowed path you and I are graciously invited to tread, as the only acceptable communication between our sinful souls and an offended God. To this the author of our text, if he were an evangelical instructor, though only enjoying the limited privileges of the patriarchal age, must have referred.

(1.) This acquaintance with God implies such a comprehension of his character and purposes in the present life, as is consistent with our capacities, and essential to our happiness. It must be acknowledged, that while terror and mystery enshrined many features of his nature and government, and forbid the investigation of finite minds, nothing vitally connected with the grand principles of our salvation is withheld from our conception—all is so plain that "the way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err therein." And are not the very restrictions which our All-wise Governor has placed upon the exemplifications of reason, equally a proof of his fatherly wisdom and love? In as much, as by limiting the range of our intellectual capacity, he fixes our attention more steadily upon the way of salvation as the great business of our short life; and thereby precludes those intricate speculations of genius, as uninformative to the understanding as they are detrimental to the spirit of piety. But though it is for us only

to comprehend the rudiments of Divine science here, we shall find in them sufficient to occupy our contemplations, and promote the work of grace in our hearts. To assist us in the attainment of heavenly knowledge, God has furnished us with two valuable revelations of himself.

One of these is the natural world, displaying the most stupendous monuments of creating power; and declaring by the circumstances of a daily life, the control of an Almighty sceptre, and the defence of a providential arm in the government of the universe. A pious survey of nature and providence will always furnish the meditative Christian with subjects of delightful contemplation; and will strengthen his confidence in the grandeur of things invisible, by the discovery of material beauties in the wonderful works of God. Reflection and careful observation on the occurrences by which we are continually surrounded, should be carefully cultivated by every follower of Christ; as they tend to enliven the feelings of the renewed heart—to fortify us against the allurements of the world—even to make comparatively trivial incidents as beacons to point us by warning and encouragement to the “city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” But seeing the insufficiency of this revelation to guide us into all truth, God has given us another instructor to bring us to himself. That instructor is his inspired word, a light in simplicity and importance, superseding every secondary oracle, as far as the dazzling brightness of the meridian surpasses the glitter of the twinkling star. Here, my brethren, you see, not only God, but God in Christ, “reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;” and never was a manifestation of the Deity so glorious and comprehensive as that exhibition in his redeeming and media-

torial relations. In this, all the attributes of his nature, the majesty of his dominion, and the benevolence of his purposes, conspire to rescue man from death, and raise him a sanctified spirit to the throne of God. By a plain delineation of the plan of salvation—by a solemn inculcation of the duties of a Christian profession—and by the presentation of a celestial diadem, as the ultimate of your labours and pains below, the words of inspiration will ever prove themselves to be “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works:” 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Then let me urge you to acquaint yourself with God, through this blessed medium. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom;” let its saving truths be engraven on your minds, your memories, and your affections; let it be “a light to your feet, and lantern to your path:” and like David, your joyous experience will be—“Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies.” “I have more understanding than all my teachers.” Never can we too highly appreciate the oracles of God. Their sacred truths making wise the simple; and founding upon an immovable basis the things that make for our peace, are admirably calculated to fortify our judgments against the seductions of vain philosophy, and to fortify our opinions against the intrusions of infidelity.

(2.) But acquaintance with God implies something more than an intellectual view of his character. The teachings of Divine truth could never sufficiently convey the doctrines of salvation to the understanding, unaided by the power of heart converting grace; and even if they could, sacred knowledge, destitute of inward grace, would only be an ornament to the soul. In Scripture language,

the knowledge of God always signifies, with inseparable meaning, the instruction of the mind and the sanctification of the nature. That Paul knew "in whom he had believed;" but it was not a mere sentiment—it was the inward persuasion, the intimate acquaintance of the renewed spirit with its God. Unhappily in modern times we are obliged to establish a clear distinction between the Christian scholar and the genuine believer—between the knowledge of the head and the knowledge of the heart. This distinction is Scripturally authorized. And be assured, my brethren, that though religious literature should rise to a summit of grandeur and perfection unparalleled by the attainments of the less highly favoured sons of former ages, it could never surmount the barrier or quell the obstinacy of innate unbelief.

"No man can truly say,
That Jesus is the Lord,
Unless thou take the veil away,
And breathe the living word."

Think not by mental culture, or the frequent advantage of pious society, moulding your feelings, and elevating your taste, to substitute that great radical change without which you cannot see the kingdom of God." You must be adopted into the family of God, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, before you can fathom the profundities of Divine science, or become fully acquainted with your God. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."

(3.) This acquaintance with God is to be cherished and perpetuated by a diligent use of the means of grace. The strongest earthly friendships are soon forgotten, unless cultivated by frequent intercourse. The same observation will apply to acquaintance with God. If not frequently

renewed by spiritual communion, it will soon become weak and languid; yea, it will finally expire. The flame kindled in our breasts when we are initiated into the heavenly family, will soon be quenched by opposing influence, if not fanned by constant breezes from the throne of God. To preserve an acquaintance with him vigorous and familiar, the Head of the church has instituted certain sacred ordinances, as channels through which he communicates his grace; and our attention to these means is not less an incumbent duty than a blessed privilege. One of these means is the constant and diligent perusal of the Word.—“Search the Scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they that testify of me.” Let me impress upon your minds the importance of this duty. We have already shown the adaptation of Holy Writ to introduce you to the knowledge of God. Remember, that the continual use of that inspired volume is equally necessary to mature your piety, and perpetuate your acquaintance with him. Let it be “the man of your counsel”—your “meditation day and night.” Another of these instituted means is prayer—“If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” It is at the mercy seat God reveals himself in unspeakable glory to his people. Here we learn his counsels, obtain a deeper insight into his character, and experience a larger measure of his grace. “Pray without ceasing; in every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you:” 1 Thess. v. 17, 18.

To these ordinances, God has added the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. We use the former as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace; while in the latter we commemorate the sacrifice of Christ, and “show forth the Lord’s death till he come.”

However indifferently these hallowed institutions may be regarded by many who bear the name of Christ, they are evidently essential to the attainment of eminent holiness. For though, in common with other means, they can communicate no grace of themselves: as the medium by which that grace is prefigured, and through which it is imparted, we should faithfully observe them. Oh! what showers of quickening grace—what baptisms of heavenly life, have the saints enjoyed in these sacraments, especially when partaking of the elements of the Saviour's body and blood!

Let me enforce upon you another spiritual duty: it is meditation. A duty, alas! too frequently neglected; yet absolutely necessary as the habit of an eminent Christian. The Psalmist testified to the value of this exercise, when he said, "My meditation of him shall be sweet." This would be your experience, if you embraced your privilege. By it your faith would be strengthened, your thoughts spiritualized, and your hopes of glory brightened: yea, by this you might live in uninterrupted converse with your reconciled Father.

All these means receive their authority from two plain arguments. One is, they are instituted by God, who cannot err. The other is, that in the experience of the church, they have always answered their great design. Obey then the exhortation of the Apostle, and think not to retain the life of God in your souls while you habitually neglect the ordinances of his house: "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another daily, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

2. Mark how Eliphaz urges immediate attention to this important duty,—"*Acquaint now thyself with him.*"

Delay not a moment! Promptly execute thy resolutions, follow thy pious impressions, and enter into the friendship of thy God!

(1.) This promptitude is demanded by the brevity of life. This is a trite subject. The warnings of the Gospel dwell on it continually. Time after time, is it enforced in various ways upon your attention, and often in vain. "Life is a passing shadow"—stands engraven on the tombs of your cemeteries; it blends its cries with the chime of every dismal knell; and it is written on almost every feature of our transient world. But man pursues his downward course. I can do no more than reiterate the momentous verity in your ears. May God apply its solemn force to your hearts! "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh up like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay."

(2.) "Acquaint *now* thyself with him," because of the importance of the work assigned. Were the work of salvation of little moment, immediate attention to it would not be so essential.

But is it a work of little moment?

Considered as a science;

As a warfare;

As a duty.

(3.) Remember, that in proportion to the intimacy of your acquaintance with God, will be your reward hereafter.

An idle evasion.

(4.) "Acquaint *now* thyself with him," because of the restrictions placed upon the influences of the Spirit.—"My Spirit shall not always strive with man."

3. Farther, we observe the text contains an exhortation to reconciliation: "Be at peace. Sin is a state of enmity and discord.

- (1.) Be at peace with God.
- (2.) Be at peace with conscience.
- (3.) Be at peace with thy understanding.
- (4.) Be at peace with Divine Providence.

II.—We now proceed to examine the promise appended to the exhortation of our text.—“Good shall come unto thee.”

This is one of the many instances in which the sacred writers, failing to embellish with ornament, or to illustrate by the most sublime figures, the happiness of the saints, descend in their description to the simplest and most comprehensive words. “*Good*” is a word of infinite meaning; and the experience of the believer in time and through the realities of eternity, will only be sufficient to develop the glories it contains.

But here we must be careful to regulate our brilliant expectations by reasonable trust. The fulfilment of this promise will be the consequence of duty performed. And in proportion to our compliance with the command here issued will be our realization of the promised good.

I. Temporal “good shall come unto thee.” The blessings of this life may all be comprised in prosperity and satisfaction. By prosperity I do not mean luxury nor wealth—for such indeed often prove a greater curse than a blessing—but I mean such a portion of this world’s goods as is consistent with the will of God concerning us. The measure of this portion, will depend much upon the wise decisions of Providence, the peculiarities of your constitution, and your various circumstances. But be it great or small, if a faithful follower of Christ, you will always testify, “Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” Industry and integrity shall be rewarded even on

this side the tomb. Your path shall be clear and your plans shall succeed, so long as they are subordinate to the direction of your Heavenly Counsellor.

But some will ask, How is it, that many of the Church of Christ, whose piety we cannot doubt———?

Satisfaction, which carpets the hovel of poverty with contentment, and challenges the darkest temptations with songs of deliverance, shall be unto you.

Arising from the knowledge of God.

Conception of his purposes.

Filial relation to him.

2. Spiritual “Good shall come unto thee.” Here lies the essence of this precious promise, and the ultimate of all your other blessings. For all the purposes of a gracious God converge to this grand design of his love, that we might be ransomed from death, renewed in righteousness, and reinstated in his favour.

(1.) A satisfaction of their acceptance with him.

(2.) Grace reigning in the heart.

(3.) The sustenance and guidance of his Holy Spirit.

(4.) In everlasting glory.

The hortatory spirit of this passage precludes the necessity of a formal application of what has been advanced.

I shall conclude by observing, that its Gospel sentiments powerfully proclaim the ability and willingness of Christ to save. Mark the terms employed to express the fulness of his grace. “Good shall come.”—The inexhaustible streams of the water of life are limited only by the conditions of repentance and simple faith. ’Tis thine to open the living fountain; and its healing streams shall flow into the soul, cleansing the pollution of inbred sin, and sweeping before it the empire of unbelief.

Yorkville, 7th Sep., 1850.

SERMON LIX.

THE TEN LEPERS.

“ And it came to pass as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain vilage, there met him ten lepers, which stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us! And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God. And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answered and said, Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made the whole.”—LUKE xvii. 11—19.

A more comprehensive epitome of the life and character of our blessed Redeemer was never perhaps uttered than that by Peter, when he styled him “ Jesus of Nazareth who went about doing good.” Follow him where you will, and when you will, through the whole period of his natural sojourn; and whether instructing in the synagogue, or conversing in the social circle; whether performing miracles in the presence of the amazed multitude, or breathing his doctrines in the retirement of some solitary mountain; whether in the subjection of his youth, or the authority of his manhood; whether in the denunciation of his wrath, or the invitations of his mercy; whether in the humiliation of his life, or the agonies of his passion and death—the

same untiring zeal inflamed his soul, and urged him to constant exertion, "to do the will of him that sent him, while it was day." His very hours of leisure, if leisure they may be called, were distinguished by the same spirit of ardent benevolence. He was always devising some plan, declaring some doctrine, or doing some work pertaining to the spread of his kingdom. Hence, while a guest at a marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, he establishes his Divinity by a striking miracle; when a visitor to the bereaved sisters of Lazarus, by shivering the bolts of death, he proves himself to be the "resurrection and the life;" and when leaning, a wearied traveller, on Jacob's well, in conversation with a Samaritan woman, he deposits an evangelical leaven, which spreads extensively and effectively to numbers around.

An example of this feature of his character, not less interesting and instructive, we have in the passage before us. We behold him journeying through the midst of Samaria and Galilee to Jerusalem; Jerusalem, that city whose name associated with his gloomy prospects—with events the most awful and important. One would have imagined, that the terrors of the approaching trial, the dismal scenes of Gethsemane, and the ignominious crucifixion of Calvary, would so have absorbed his thoughts, as to render him insensible to all passing circumstances. But Christ was God. His infinite mind was too conversant with the great end of his coming, to tremble at the eventful hour. And while he neared the fatal city, his feelings show him, not a guilty prisoner, but a redeeming Deity. He enters a village and is met by ten poor lepers. His magnanimous soul now yearns with all its native compassion; and he stops to hear their cry. Oh, how exemplary the tenderness, the diligence of your faithful High Priest.

In the exposition of this narrative, replete with some of the most important evangelical doctrines, we claim your attentive consideration—

I.—In the first place, to the state of these individuals by whom our Lord was accosted.

1. They were *lepers*. Amongst the motley train of diseases in the sultry climate of Palestine, none was more loathsome, nor dreadful than the leprosy. The nature of this awful malady, as described by Moses in the Pentateuch, has been sufficiently corroborated by the testimony of oriental travellers.

(1.) Although the plague is distinguished by several species, some of these more malignant than others; they were all regarded with the most terrible apprehensions.

(2.) On account of its infectious qualities, the unfortunate leper was excluded from all society, and treated universally with abhorrence and disgust.

(3.) It was usually one of the severe visitations of the Almighty, upon those who had grossly violated his law, and thereby incurred his wrath and judgment. Hence laws the most rigid were enacted by God concerning it in the ceremonial code of the Jews; and it was commonly regarded with feelings of religious horror, as the penalty of flagrant transgression. Even as early in the Israelitish history as two years after the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt, we find lepers were obliged to reside without the camp, lest they should defile the place of Jehovah's residence. And so strictly was the law enforced, that Miriam, the sister of Moses, when visited with this distemper, notwithstanding her honourable relation to the sacred Law-giver, was shut out from the camp seven days.

It was generally admitted that this awful disease was incurable by any power but that of God—such an

opinion having arisen from the frequent instances in which its inroads baffled the ingenuity of all medical prescriptions.

Unfortunate outcasts from society, denied the pleasures of social intercourse and esteem, and uncheered by the hope of human relief, these wretched beings, sometimes naturally associating with their fellow sufferers, pined a miserable existence, in the dreariness of solitude, or the unfrequented wilds of retirement.

Here, my brethren, you have an expressive emblem of that moral malady, to which we are all by nature victims—a malady extending to every principle of our nature, infecting the desires, the affections, the whole inward man, of our universal race.

All are tainted by its direful symptoms. Though in some, its outbreaks may be less violent than in others; and, through the influence of religious education and pious connections, may have smothered its asperities in some, and distinguished them by external morality from the profane mass around them. Yes, the radix of this fearful plague lies deeply seated in every human heart, making its subjects obnoxious to everlasting condemnation, and to banishment from the glory of God's power for ever.

The moral contagion has extended its direful ravages through the whole empire of earth; and the practical intercourse of men with each other has aggravated the power of their latent disease. So that wherever we turn our eyes, we behold the workings of the "mystery of iniquity," sweeping devastatingly through nations and communities, declaring with additional force the sad doctrine of St. Paul: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Excluded from holy society.

Incurable by any power but grace.

2. Observe their humility: "They stood afar off."

According to law.

Prompted by genuine conviction.

3. Their anxiety for deliverance from their disease:

"Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

They did not cry "*unclean*."

II.—Consider the response of Jesus: "Go show yourselves."

1. He conformed to the law.

2. He tries their faith.

III.—The result: "As they went they were cleansed."

1. Cure immediate.

2. Virtue not in means.

IV.—The gratitude of one, compared with the heartless forgetfulness of the rest.

1. His praise was voluntary.

2. He was a Samaritan.

V.—The blessed assurance which the grateful leper received.

1. It was a spiritual cure.

2. His connection with the others did not prevent it.

Yorkville, 14th Sept., 1850.

THE END.

INDEX.

	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION,.....	3
EARLY HISTORY,.....	7
CONVERSION AND INCIPIENT EFFORTS TO BE USEFUL,.....	12
ITINERANT LIFE AND LABOURS,.....	25
HIS LAST SICKNESS AND DEATH,.....	50
MENTAL AND MORAL CHARACTER.....	61

INDEX TO THE REMAINS.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE REMAINS.....	73
-----------------------------------	----

SERMONS AND SKETCHES.

SERMON I.

Purity of Heart.—Matt. v. 8.....	75
----------------------------------	----

II.

The Warning of Lot to his Friends.—Gen. xix. 14.....	84
--	----

III.

Christian Liberty.—Gal. v. 1.....	91
-----------------------------------	----

IV.

The Revival of the Church, Preparatory to the Spread of the Gospel.—Acts iii. 19.....	97
--	----

V.

The Heavenly Rest.—Heb. iv. 9.....	99
------------------------------------	----

VI.

Different Receptions of the Gospel.—Acts xxviii. 24.....	105
--	-----

VII.

- Obedience Requisite to the Perfect Knowledge of Religious Truth.—John vii. 17..... 108

VIII.

- Spiritual Worship.—John iv. 21—23..... 112
(Preached at an Opening Service.)

IX.

- Waiting Upon the Lord.—Isa. xl. 31..... 115

X.

- Christian Moderation.—Phil. iv. 5..... 117

XI.

- The Sanctuary the Place of the Divine Manifestations.
 Ps. lxxvii. 13..... 118

XII.

- Good Wine at the End of the Feast.—John ii. 10..... 121

XIII.

- The Intercession of Christ.—Heb. vii. 25..... 122

XIV.

- Christ Testified by the Prophets.—Acts x. 43..... 127

XV.

- The Young Man's Way Cleansed.—Ps. cxix. 9..... 128

XVI.

- God in the Midst of the Church.—Isa. xii. 6..... 131

XVII.

- Simeon in the Temple.—Luke ii. 25—32..... 133

XVIII.

- The Christian "Acceptable to God and Approved of Men."—Rom. xiv. 18..... 135

XIX.

- A Charge to the Rich.—1 Tim. vi. 17—19..... 136

XX.

Christian Confidence.—Heb. x. 35..... 137

XXI.

Heavenly Wisdom.—James iii. 17..... 142

XXII.

The Humiliation of Christ.—Isa. liii. 2..... 144

XXIII.

The Resurrection of Lazarus.—John xi. 35..... 145

XXIV.

Believers Risen with Christ.—Col. iii. 1..... 147

XXV.

The Spirit of Christ, the Essential Portion of Every True
Believer.—Rom. viii. 9..... 149

XXVI.

The Omniscience of God.—Heb. iv. 13..... 153

XXVII.

The Weary and Heavy-laden Invited to Christ.—Matt. xi. 28 154

XXVIII.

Little Sins.—Gen. xix. 20..... 155

XXIX.

Christian Perseverance.—Col. ii. 6..... 156

XXX.

The Christian Comforted by the Example of Christ.
Heb. xiii. 12, 13..... 157

XXXI.

Acknowledging God.—Prov. iii. 16..... 158

XXXII.

Attaining the Full Reward.—2 John 8..... 159

XXXIII.

Christ Precious to Believers.—1 Pet. ii. 7..... 160

XXXIV.

Spiritual Melancholy Consoled.—Ps. xliii. 5..... 161

XXXV.

Comfort for the Bereaved.—1 Thess. iv. 18..... 162
(*Funeral Occasion.*)

XXXVI.

Ease in Zion.—Amos vi. 1..... 163

XXXVII.

Error.—James i. 16 164

XXXVIII.

Hearing the Gospel.—Luke viii. 18..... 165

XXXIX.

The Pharisee and the Publican.—Luke xviii. 10—15..... 166

XL.

The Danger of Hardening the Neck.—Prov. xxix. 1..... 167

XLI.

The New Creation.—2 Cor. v. 17..... 169

XLII.

The Excuses of Sinners Answered.—Luke xiv. 18..... 173

XLIII.

The Omnipotence of God.—Jer. xxxii. 27..... 175

XLIV.

Christian Endurance.—2 Tim. ii. 3..... 177

XLV.

The Gainful Tendency of Godliness.—1 Tim. vi. 6..... 178

XLVI.

The Glorious Prospect of the Sons of God.—1 John iii. 2... 179

XLVII.

Believers Stimulated to Persevere in Well Doing.—Gal. vi. 9 181

XLVIII.

The Christian's Warfare and Reward.—Rev. iii. 5..... 185

XLIX.

The Form of Sound Words.—2 Tim. i. 13..... 187

L.

Conversation Becoming the Gospel.—Phil. i. 27..... 188

LI.

The Unspeakable Gift.—2 Cor. ix. 15..... 189

LII.

Self-Dedication to God.—Rom. xii. 1..... 190

LIII.

The Little Flock of Christ Encouraged.—Luke xii. 32..... 193

LIV.

David's Acknowledgement of God.—2 Saml. xxii. 31..... 207

LV.

Practical Holiness Essential to the Perfect Knowledge
of Religious Truth.—John iii. 17..... 222

LVI.

Christ the Strength of the Believer.—Phil. iv. 13..... 228

LVII.

The Christian Race.—Heb. xii. 1..... 230

LVIII.

Acquaintance and Peace with God.—Job. xxii. 21..... 235

LIX.

The Ten Lepers.—Luke xvii. 11—19..... 246



